

# Socialist Voice

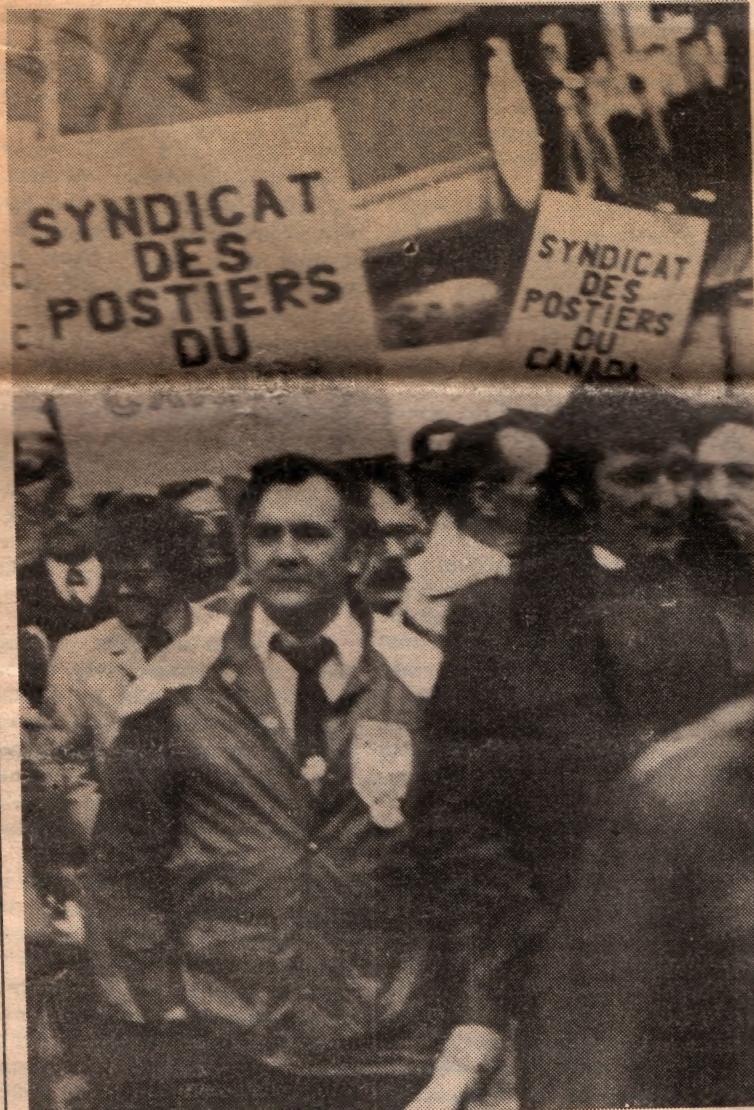
Vol. 2, No. 17 (24)

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November 13, 1978

## Stop all attacks on public sector

### Challenge to Ontario and B.C. Fed. conventions



By Ken Theobald

Collective bargaining is fast becoming collective bludgeoning in the public sector. If there was any doubt before, the federal government's brutal handling of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) strike showed its hand. It is trying to seriously weaken the public sector unions, as a prelude to abolishing their right to strike and saddling them with a permanent form of wage controls.

The labor movement has known for more than a year and a half of the intention of governments—at all levels—to control public sector wages after wage controls were phased out. Yet the Canadian Labor Congress (CLC) has done nothing to develop a unified and effective strategy to defeat the government's attack.

Union members in Ontario and British Columbia have an opportunity to begin to reverse this course at their federation conventions this month. Action proposals to defeat Bill C-28 should be a central topic of discussion at both conventions.

#### A sweeping attack

The Trudeau government first introduced its formula to limit public sector wages and benefits in the summer of 1977. It was dubbed "average comparability of total compensation" (ACTC). Under this plan each group of public employees would be related to a "comparable" group in private industry. The *average* increases in the private sector, *including* sweatshops and the unorganized plants, would become the *maximum* conceded to public sector workers.

At the First Ministers' conference in February 1978, all the provincial governments agreed to cooperate with this formula. In March, the Trudeau government introduced Bill C-28, an

act to make ACTC a legislated part of the Public Service Staff Relations Act. Although Bill C-28 died when Parliament recessed for the summer, October's Throne Speech outlined the government's plan to pass the bill in this session.

Bill C-28 has become the subject of many speeches by union leaders, but so far, little has been done to fight it. The CLC's Shirley Carr has stated that it "destroys the process of collective bargaining." CUPE president Grace Hartman called it "an attack on all workers." "First government keeps public service wages to what is bargained in the private sector. Then big business, which really controls government, start to play footsy and say 'we'll cooperate and restrain wages too.' So really controls are continuing for everybody, but through the backdoor," she points out.

#### Union-busting legislation

Labor's criticisms of Bill C-28 are no exaggeration. For the federal public service it would eliminate many of the already limited collective-bargaining rights gained in 1967. If applied by the federal and provincial governments, it would affect 42 percent of the membership of the CLC!

CUPE's research director has written that under ACTC "wages and fringe benefit facts will be placed in a computer which will then spit out 'the facts' on what changes may be allowed in a collective agreement.... Bargaining in the public sector will become a highly bureaucratic exercise.... Once the ACTC system is operational, governments will likely bring pressure to bear to decertify public employee unions."

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# INCO

## support grows

By Ken Theobald

The strike by Local 6500 of the United Steelworkers against Inco has been called a strike that cannot be won. For the pundits in the big-business media, the odds may appear to be against the 11,700 strikers. But on the side of the union is a growing solidarity among Sudbury area workers for their fight.

Local 6500 president Dave Patterson has commented that "the 61 percent of members who voted against the last company offer was translated into 100 percent when the strike started." One Inco worker admitted: "I didn't vote for the strike, but I'm behind the union now," and added, "It's a lot better organized than other strikes."

Since the strike began, the local has concentrated on building community support and protection for its members, with a number of committees being formed within the union and in Sudbury.

A Citizens Strike Support Committee is producing a bi-weekly *Strike Support News* and has plans to organize benefit concerts and rallies. A women's support group, Wives Supporting the Strike, was formed September 30. A few hundred wives, children, and strikers attended a picket rally organized by the group on October 29 outside the main gate of Inco's Copper Cliff smelter. Other planned activities include a showing of the film "Harlan County, USA" to wives, and a wives' contingent in Sudbury's Santa Claus parade to call for support to the strike.

The strike is costing the local and the international union close to \$2 million a month. The local is receiving about \$350,000 per week from the USWA strike fund for strike benefits alone. The full-time officers of Local 6500 are receiving the same strike pay as everyone else. The local faces many added costs, including over \$500,000 a month just to pay health insurance and medical benefits to its members.

In the past few weeks steps have been taken to broaden labor support across the country. Dave Patterson attended the Saskatchewan Federation of Labor convention and Local 6500 delegates will be going to the Ontario Federation of Labor (OFL) convention to raise financial and moral support.

Some unions have responded, but so far the number is still inadequate to meet the strikers' needs. The most notable contribution has come from workers at Falconbridge Mines, members of the Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers Union. At a meeting on November 5 the membership voted to donate \$10,000 a month, and to allow plant-gate collections twice a month, for Local 6500. It is a significant step for these two unions which in the past have been bitter rivals.

United Steelworkers Local 6855, representing office, clerical and technical workers at Falconbridge, is donating \$1,000 a month. Algoma steelworkers in Sault Ste. Marie approved a \$10,000 donation and will be contributing \$5,000 monthly. The United Electrical Workers have sent \$1,000, as has the Sudbury local of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union.

While the strike is becoming solid in the Sudbury area, little support has come from the central bodies of the labor movement. Last year's OFL convention took place shortly after Inco's announcement of its mass layoffs. An amended resolution was overwhelmingly adopted pledging "active, public, and financial support to the Inco workers" and demanding the "nationalization of Inco under workers' control without compensation." The OFL did not act upon this and the layoffs took place.

This year's convention will take place as the strike against Inco ends its second month. The spirit of last year's resolution must be reaffirmed and this time



Wives and children of striking Inco workers demonstrate their support outside the gates of Inco's main smelter at Copper Cliff, October 29. Tribune photo

## 'Wives work for Inco too'

By Mary Ellen Marus

Wives and families of United Steelworkers Local 6500 have begun to mobilize in support of the Inco strike. A women's support group, Wives Supporting the Strike, was formed September 30, and distributed a leaflet asking the "women of 6500" to get involved in the strike.

Linda Obonsawin, a spokeswoman for the group, and wife of a Copper Cliff mine worker, said, "it's time the wives should get involved, so that the company can't use us against our own husbands. We should be part of it; it's our company, too."

The wives group, which has its roots in the International Women's Day celebrations of last year, wants to keep women informed about the strike and provide practical aid and moral support to the strikers' families. Meeting weekly at the union hall, the group plans activities to help women deal with the financial and emotional impact of the strike. Activities include children's parties, clothing and toy exchanges, car-pools, and babysitting cooperatives.

In order to involve the men when they are not on the picket line the committee hopes to form a skills exchange service whereby one worker could fix something at another's house and trade it for something else.

The group, now 100 women strong, is attempting to organize these activities on a neighborhood basis so that every wife can have input into the group and keep informed. Neighborhood entertainment, pot-luck suppers,

and buying food for groups of families are ways they suggest to ease the pressure of the strike. Recently, a successful family day on the picket line was organized by "Wives Supporting the Strike."

This formation is a big departure from what happened the last time the Inco workers decided to take on the giant mining company in the face of large stockpiles of nickel. In 1958, priests and politicians brought thousands of strikers' wives to a meeting in the Sudbury Arena where they demanded a return to work. Within a month the strike ended in a humiliating defeat for the union just before Christmas.

Arja Laine, a spokeswoman for the wives' committee pointed out, "the sooner we get organized the less chance there will be for that kind of manipulation to take place this time. We know that if we are supporting our husbands, the men will be able to stay out long enough to get a decent contract."

"Wives work for Inco too," another spokeswoman said. "We do all the day-to-day chores that make it possible for men in this community to go and produce for the company."

"We realize how important it is to have the wives behind us," Dave Patterson, president of Local 6500 said. "What we don't want is another 1958 situation."

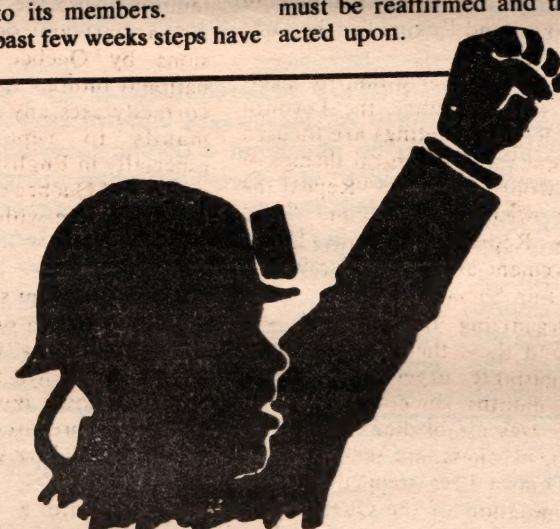
Wives of miners are not the only women affected by the Sudbury strike. In the previous layoffs almost all of the 300 women workers at Inco lost their jobs because of their relatively low seniority. Some of these women

are now part of the Citizens' Strike Support Committee, a group which describes itself as friends of the labor movement working to organize support for 6500's strike, and which works closely with the wives' committee.

Overall, the job situation for women in Sudbury is dismal. According to a recent release by Statistics Canada, only 39.9 percent of Sudbury women were either working or looking for work in 1976—the lowest rate in the country. The low participation rate reflects a lack of opportunity for women in an economy where the major industries, such as mining, are basically employers of men. Wives and working women have every reason to work together to support the strikers.

"The wives are now looking ahead to Christmas," Ms. Laine said. "Christmas will be a real test. With the wives organized, we can have an old-fashioned Christmas." Locals of United Steelworkers are being urged to help raise money for a special holiday fund for Local 6500.

A solidarity benefit and rally is being planned for early in December in Toronto by such organizations as: Organized Working Women, the ONDP Women's Committee, the International Women's Day Committee, OFL Women's Committee, and Local 6500. Women from the Wives Supporting the Strike group will speak about their support for the Sudbury strike, about how the Sudbury situation is a concrete example of the economic hardships women face today, and what women can do about it.



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# Skeletons stay in closet

## Keable Commission silenced

By Richard Fidler

The Trudeau government's cover-up of RCMP crimes got a further boost on Hallowe'en when the Supreme Court of Canada gutted the powers of Quebec's inquiry into the RCMP Security Service.

The country's highest court ruled unanimously (8-0) that Quebec—and other provinces—have no constitutional authority to investigate RCMP policies and internal "investigative procedures." Nor do they have the power to force the federal government to produce papers from the files of Canada's political police.

The court held that the Quebec inquiry, headed by Jean Keable, could reopen with a reduced mandate—to check out the involvement of individual RCMP officers in crimes on Quebec territory. But the ruling effectively prevents the commission from finding out who authorized even the illegal acts the RCMP admits to committing.

Perhaps more significantly, the Supreme Court's October 31 ruling underwrote the federal government's use of a number of highly undemocratic laws and procedures that have frustrated many attempts to find out about RCMP operations. These include:

- the Official Secrets Act, which allows government officials to stamp anything they want confidential and then pro-

secute anyone, even an inquiry commissioner like Jean Keable, for having it or releasing it without permission;

- the Federal Court Act, which allows the government to obtain a court order prohibiting disclosure of documents simply by certifying that they would disclose confidential cabinet information or would harm international relations, federal-provincial relations, or national defense or security; and
- the constitutional principle that provinces cannot subpoena cabinet ministers to testify or to produce documents because the ministers represent the Crown and no one can force the Crown to do anything.

"Wouldn't Richard Nixon have loved powers such as those?" asked the *Globe and Mail*, in a November 1 editorial.

Indeed, even Nixon's Watergate antics begin to pale beside the Trudeau government's strenuous efforts to suppress the facts about RCMP crimes against democratic rights. Ottawa intervened no fewer than four times in lower courts before it finally got the Quebec Court of Appeal to terminate the Keable inquiry last February. Now the Supreme Court has upheld that ruling.

At the time it was halted, the Quebec commission was trying to establish how much Mountie officials and federal government ministers knew about the incidents it was investigating, such as the break-in and theft at the

Agence de Presse Libre du Quebec.

Ironically, the federal government's McDonald Commission—appointed in part to give Ottawa a pretext to suppress the Quebec commission—is now venturing into the same area of investigation. And Trudeau has already announced that he will prevent the McDonald probe from making public documents on cabinet policy toward the RCMP that his government wants to conceal.

in the Montreal area, was reportedly never interrogated or harassed by the police, although they are said to have known all along of his role in the kidnapping.

"The most widely held theory circulating in the corridors of the National Assembly," reported the Montreal daily *le Devoir* November 1, "is that Monsieur X was in fact a police informer. . . ."

With disclosures like that continuing to come out, no wonder they're so nervous in Ottawa.



So far the Parti Quebecois government has said little about the Supreme Court ruling on the Keable inquiry. Justice Minister Marc-Andre Bedard, however, has suggested that the decision may force the PQ to drop plans to hold a public inquiry into the events surrounding the 1970 October crisis.

That's a pity. The day before the Supreme Court verdict, the Montreal press revealed for the first time that a mysterious sixth person was involved in the "FLQ" kidnapping of James Cross in October 1970. This "Monsieur X," who is now living

## 800 march for strikers

By Rosemary Ray

EDMONTON—On October 28 strikers at the Parkland nursing home received some badly needed support from the Alberta labor movement, as 800 union members marched and rallied at the provincial legislature to support their cause. Hundreds of delegates attending the Alberta Union of Public Employees (AUPE) convention joined the protest, along with contingents from CUPE and the postal workers union.

The Parkland workers have been on the picket line for 20 months now in a battle to win their first contract. They are seeking wage parity with workers in other provincial nursing homes—hardly more than the provincial minimum wage—but the owner of the home, multi-millionaire Charles Allard, has refused to negotiate with them. They have been harassed by cops, scabs, and the courts, and ignored by the government.

The union-busting intentions of Parkland has been clear for some time. The nursing home

management "offered" to take all but 10 of the striking workers back. The union says those 10 are being blacklisted because of their union activity.

The protest action gave a big boost to the strikers' morale—and the union's defence fund. AUPE president John Booth presented Parkland local president Haddie Jahner with a cheque for \$5,000 that was voted to the strikers during the AUPE convention, and another for \$1,055 raised from a delegate collection taken at the convention.

Alberta Federation of Labor president Harry Kostiuk and provincial NDP leader Grant Notley addressed the rally, expressing their support for the strike. Edd Langelier, a western region staff representative from the postal union (CUPW), also declared his union's solidarity with the Parkland workers, comparing their struggle to that of his own union. "We know the role that the police and courts played in harassing Parkland and we know the role worker in this country."

## Operation Liberte builds support

By Ed Miller

As *Operation Liberte* participants in Montreal make final preparations for a massive demonstration and rally against repression on November 17, solidarity meetings are being planned in Toronto and Regina for the same date.

As with earlier solidarity meetings in other cities, the Toronto and Regina meetings are focused around the two central themes of the Montreal action: "Repeal the War Measures Act" and "End State Repression of the Labor Movement and All Those Working For Social Change."

Organizing in a united way around these themes has become increasingly urgent during the five months since *Operation Liberte* was established.

Big business and their partners in Ottawa have stepped up their intimidation of the Quebec people, hoping to "persuade" them not to exercise their democratic rights to choose their own political future. Cadbury-Schweppes Ltd., in a clear act of economic blackmail, has decided to shut down a major plant in Quebec on the second anniversary of the Parti Quebecois' election.

Capitalist newspapers continue to blare dire predictions for Quebec's economy should it choose any form of "sovereignty-association" in the referendum expected next year. And federal cabinet members, including Trudeau, promise to make those predictions come true.

There will be no economic or political relations with an independent Quebec, they say—a thinly veiled threat to establish

an economic blockade, possibly in cooperation with the United States.

Nor has the military threat been allowed to rest. Trudeau has twice repeated this fall his intention to use the War Measures Act against any one-sided decisions by Quebec on its own national future. *Operation Liberte* correctly sees any organized demands to repeal the act, especially in English Canada, as a defense of Quebec's right to shape its own future without threats or intimidation.

Ottawa's recent smashing of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers strike—using courts, Parliament, and RCMP raids on union offices—shows how far governments are prepared to go in attacking labor's organized strength.

In Toronto a meeting sponsored by the *Operation Liberty Support Group* will be held 8 p.m., November 17, at Eastminster United Church, 310 Danforth Ave. Active participants in the Support Group have included the *Body Politic* Collective, the Law Union of Ontario, the Revolutionary Workers League (RWL) and *In Struggle!*

In Regina a rally on the 17th will be addressed by Lorne Brown, author of *An Unauthorized History of the RCMP*, and Paul Kouri of the RWL. That rally is sponsored by the Saskatchewan Human Rights Association, the Provincial Gay Coalition, Women's Action Collective on Health (WACH), and Voice of the Handicapped, as well as the RWL and *In Struggle!*



800 unionists march through the streets of Edmonton on October 28 in support of Parkland Nursing Home workers.



# where we stand

## Nov 15: two years after

Two years ago on November 15 the face of politics in Canada and Quebec was fundamentally changed. To everyone's astonishment the Parti Quebecois was elected as the government of Quebec. For some it was a shock, for others a delightful surprise. There was dancing in the streets of Montreal.

Instantly Ottawa stepped up its anti-Quebec propaganda machine. Levesque was threatening the economy. Canada would fall apart if Quebec left. Every right-minded Canadian was supposed to speak out and stand up for the true north strong and free.

Millions were spent to create an atmosphere of intimidation. The RCMP revelations made clear that Ottawa was prepared to go well beyond the bounds of its own laws to stop the independence movement. And just to make sure that the Quebecois knew how far the federal government was prepared to go, Trudeau threatened to use the "sword" if necessary.

But Trudeau has had a hard time trying to convince the majority of working people in English Canada that Quebec independence is their biggest problem. The October by-elections showed that the majority of Canadian people blame the Liberal government, not the Quebecois for their problems.

But at the same time, the PQ has been in constant retreat. Those who have been looking to the PQ government for leadership in the national liberation struggle have been sorely disappointed. First it watered down independence to sovereignty-association. Recently it went even further, making the referendum a mandate for negotiations with the rest of Canada; thus dropping even the demand for the right of self-determination for Quebec.

Increasing numbers of independentists are beginning to see that the PQ will not bring national liberation to Quebec. The Montreal council of the CSN voted for independence and socialism. The teachers federation voted for independence, and other labor federations are discussing their positions.

As the Quebec labor movement takes into its own hands the responsibility for the struggle for independence, the federal government will step up its anti-Quebec offensive with a vengeance. During the federal elections Clark and Trudeau will compete as to who can better "hold Canada together"; who can better smash the Quebec independence movement.

The fight for the defence of the right of self-determination for Quebec takes on increasing importance as the federal elections and PQ referendum approach.

## The Butcher and the Judas-goat

The recent announcement of the Nobel Peace Prize Committee that this year's award is going to Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin and Egyptian President Anwar Sadat has been greeted throughout the world with some chagrin. No sooner had the ink dried on the Camp David accords than Israel announced a new \$20 million program to beef up five Jewish settlements in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza—a move that could easily lead to a new eruption of violence in the Middle East.

There is a touch of irony in the Nobel committee's decision to make this joint award. More than any other two men, Begin and Sadat symbolize the tragedy of the Arab world.

Anwar Sadat—the first major Arab leader to recognize the legitimacy of the state of Israel; the Israel that was created by driving 700,000 Palestinians from their homes. Sadat—the Benedict Arnold of the Arab east.

Menachem Begin—leader of the state that has acted as enforcer for U.S. policy in the Middle East for the past 30 years. Known among the Palestinian people as the "Butcher of Dir Yassir" for his leadership of the Zionist terrorist organization, the Irgun Tzvai Leumi, which carried out the slaughter of 256 unarmed Palestinians at the village of Dir Yassir near Jerusalem in 1948.

Begin and Sadat—the Butcher and the Judas-goat. Neither will bring peace to the Middle East. Their "peace" accord can only lead to the next massacre—and the next, and the next, and the next—until there is a real solution to the Palestinian question. Until the Palestinian people recover their homeland and chase imperialism from the region once and for all.

## write on

### Women work too

I am liking the *Socialist Voice* these days. I appreciate it more than any of its predecessors—for the scope and quality of its coverage, its variety, its political line and tone.

One complaint—a recurring one for me. While in general your coverage of women's liberation issues is quite good, there is a tendency to "overlook" the question of women in the labor movement—our status, role, influence, or lack of same, and so on.

The example that brought this to mind for me again was your box "Calculate Your '78 Wage Cut" in the October 16 issue. A striking confirmation of the purpose of wage controls! But your

bottom cutoff point is \$10,000 a year.

As a unionized worker with two years experience I still do not make \$10,000 a year. And this is not unusual—low wages are a feature of the "female job ghetto." And, of course, with less than 25 percent of the female workforce unionized, the majority of working women are making less than your lowest figure.

The traditional conception of the working class as a male preserve is one which will require constant, conscious effort to correct. *Socialist Voice* can play an important role in transforming this idea. But to do so you'll have to be more careful!

Susan Genge

### Graphics in Socialist Voice

This weekend Edmonton *Socialist Voice* salespersons sold roughly 150 copies of issue no. 23 at the Parkland demo and the NDP convention. When I sell, I want to be able to support both the ideas and the graphics in the paper.

This issue featured the conflict in the post office, and was easy to sell to working people. However, many workers find the "Finger" (on a stamp in the center-page article) an offensive and childish symbol. As it made no valid "political" point, why bother?

In Struggle  
B.M.

## discussion

## Fight inside the NDP

The following article continues the debate on the draft election program of the Revolutionary Workers League, published in the August 1 issue of *Socialist Voice*.

We invite contributions from readers—whether supporters of the RWL, members of other groups and organizations, or unaffiliated individuals. Contributions should be no longer than one half page of our paper, and we reserve the right to edit for length.

Alex Reavie ("Building the party means going beyond the NDP," October 16) agrees with the RWL that "We should call for a vote for the NDP...." But he takes issue with the draft program's assertion that workers who support the NDP should fight the class-collaborationist policies of the NDP leaders. That, he argues, "would point toward fighting within the party"—a futile approach, he says, because the NDP, unlike the unions, cannot be transformed into an instrument of revolutionary class struggle.

Instead, he suggests, "We should counterpose the RWL to the NDP... calling for building the RWL.

The approach Reavie outlines is a sectarian one, which would cut revolutionary socialists off from participation and leadership in struggles of masses of working people as they radicalize and confront the bureaucratic leaderships of their unions and other mass organizations. It would thereby hinder the building of the RWL.

Reavie's major error is to fail to see how the question of the NDP relates to class-struggle strategy in the unions. Socialists fight to strengthen the unions by making them fighting instruments of the workers, around a program based on rank-and-file union democracy, and support of the struggles of all the exploited and oppressed. This is a political program; logically, it points to the need for workers to struggle for the overthrow of capitalism through establishing their own government in place of the capitalists'.

The unions in English Canada have a political instrument, the NDP. More than 1.5 million workers vote for it; over a quarter million are members of the

party through their affiliated unions. The NDP is rooted in the historical experience of the English-Canadian working class; it grew out of long struggles, led by workers in the key industrial unions, to break the labor movement from its traditional support of capitalist parties, and to build a party based directly on the power of the unions.

The NDP has consolidated a strong base in the West, is gaining strength in the industrial heartland of Ontario, and has recently made significant gains in the Atlantic provinces.

We think it is progressive that workers fight to put the NDP in power. It reflects their elementary understanding of the need to break with the capitalist parties and elect a party that speaks in their name.

At the same time we recognize that the NDP in itself does not point the way toward a workers' government. While organizationally independent of the capitalists, the NDP is programmatically subordinate to them. Its program is the program of the union bureaucrats, who think capitalism need not be overthrown but simply administered more "equitably." As a program that defends capitalist property and laws, it does not advance the workers' interests.

But what should labor do about the NDP? Should unions simply accept the NDP program as is, and ignore the party in their day-to-day struggles? Should they disaffiliate from the party? Or should they challenge the NDP—as a party based on the unions—to represent workers' interests, and mobilize their forces within the party to fight for class-struggle policies?

Instead of confronting important questions like these, which are being posed today by many militants in the unions, Alex Reavie takes refuge in abstract propositions divorced from time and place: The NDP can't be transformed.... We must defeat the reformists and build a revolutionary party, and so on.

But the reformist leaders will be defeated only through the experience and struggles of the working class, in the course of constant battles with their class-collaborationist program and policies in all arenas where work-

ers confront these leaders. One of those arenas is the NDP.

As long as most politically thinking workers support the NDP we should urge them to unite behind the NDP in elections, to mobilize the strength of their unions to help win thousands of working people to the side of the labor movement and the NDP in opposition to the capitalist parties. Workers should fight for an NDP government—and not just in electoral periods—by integrating this general perspective into a class-struggle strategy. Unions should debate the NDP's program and formulate their own proposals for action on key questions facing the class. They should challenge the NDP to defend the workers' interests. And they should carry these debates and proposals into the NDP, and fight for the party to adopt and defend them.

In short, socialists should seek to build a mass movement for an NDP government that can unite the workers' ranks in a real struggle for power, and thereby go beyond the NDP.

Reavie acknowledges that struggles within the NDP against its reformist program could result in important gains for revolutionary socialists. But, strangely, he seems to advocate abstention from such struggles, since participating alongside left currents in the NDP he says, would mean "building the NDP."

It is not a question of "building the NDP," but of seeking to put an independent class content into the workers' struggle for NDP governments. Reavie fails to grasp that the struggle of socialists in the NDP as in the unions against the class-collaborationist program of the bureaucracy is a struggle that builds the unions, not Social Democracy. And to the degree that the RWL will become involved in such struggles, and help lead them, it will build the RWL.

In this sense, the revolutionists' call for a vote for the NDP is simply one aspect of an overall strategy aimed at developing the independent struggle of the workers for governmental power. Since the NDP and labor leaders reject this perspective, it is a means of struggle against them.

Richard Fidler  
Toronto

# Kill Bill C-28!

continued from page 1

The focus of Bill C-28 is to maintain controls over public employees, but it also contains sweeping attacks on other union rights. The original bill proposed to outlaw strikes during election campaigns. Before Parliament recessed this was separated and passed as Bill C-45 directed at the postal workers.

Bill C-28 gives the government the right to lock out its workers—a curious provision at a time when the right to strike is under attack. For the first time, government workers would be subject to layoffs. The bill gives the employer the right to alter the duties of workers thus undermining the classification system. Thousands of workers would be excluded from union bargaining units by extending "managerial" exclusions.

Another aspect of Bill C-28 rarely mentioned by the labor movement is that it would negate any equal-pay provisions and, just like wage controls, would ensure that the wage gap between women and men workers would increase. Under the "comparability" formula, wages for women public employees, who are almost all unionized, would be compared to those in "female ghetto" jobs in the private sector, such as clerical jobs that are largely unorganized.

In all its implications, Bill C-28 is a far more sweeping threat to organized labor than even the Anti-Inflation Board controls. It would establish permanent controls over the public sector, threatening the right to strike and ultimately the very basis for existence of the unions.

#### Labor's response: all talk, little action

The union most directly affected by Bill C-28, the 180,000-member Public Service Alliance of Canada has launched a three-point plan of action to fight it. The first step is to publish the position of every MP on Bill C-28. The second is to establish Political Action Groups, "in cooperation with other unions," to work against candidates in the federal elections who support the bill. The third step "will be to set up local or regional strike committees to prepare for the eventuality of a withdrawal of services" if necessary. PSAC is also organizing "Fair deal for public employees" rallies across the country.

At the April CLC convention an emergency resolution, unanimously adopted, resolved that the CLC would "organize wholehearted support for any demonstra-

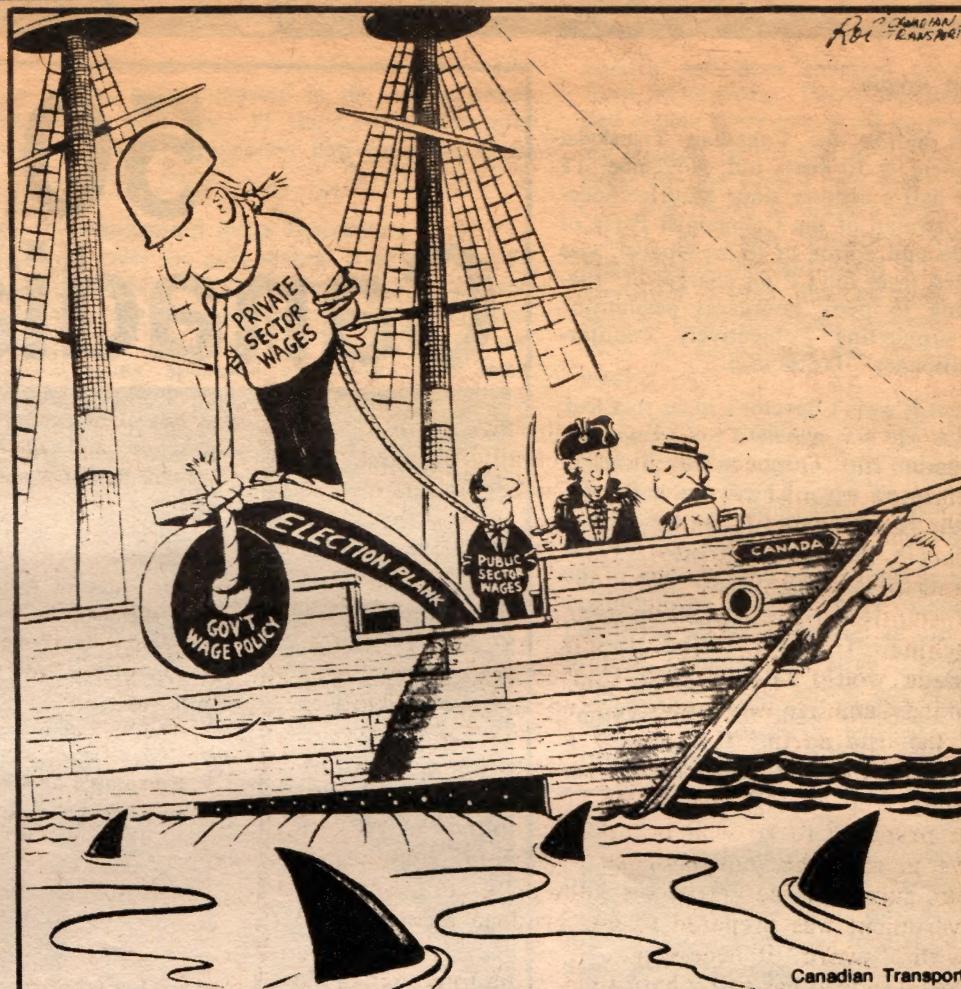
tions, meetings, lobbies or other actions necessary to defeat Bill C-28." The need for unity between the private and public sector unions was stressed. CLC President Dennis McDermott himself urged the delegates to "forget our differences in the past," and "stand as one." The CLC's scandalous silence during the CUPW strike made it painfully obvious that this was empty rhetoric.

In addition, the CLC has done nothing to build the campaign against C-28. It has not built the C-28 rallies. A Toronto rally on October 11, for example, was endorsed by 11 public sector unions, but *not one* industrial union. The CLC itself has done nothing to defeat the bill.

While on record as opposing C-28, the NDP has hardly been vigorous in its denunciations of the scheme. Rather than joining the fight, the NDP is trying to duck out of the way.

Both the CLC and NDP leaderships are using Bill C-28 to urge workers to go through the electoral process, to vote NDP, rather than fight it in the streets. PSAC is also emphasizing electoralist and lobbyist tactics.

While the labor movement should work to defeat the candidates of the capitalist parties and elect NDP MPs, voting NDP is hardly a strategy to smash Bill C-28. That was one of the clear lessons of the fight against the AIB, where NDP governments



government succeeds in inflicting permanent wage controls on public employees, moves to attack the private sector will not be far behind. A massive weakening of almost half the organized labor movement will be a body blow from which labor will find it

movement, including, if necessary, a general strike. At a C-28 rally in Winnipeg 500 workers unanimously endorsed a resolution calling for a general strike as a last resort.

But instead labor leaders are counselling defeat. McDermott recently said that the CLC's advice to CUPW was "you take your best stand but you cannot win in a confrontation with the government, either in concert with us or alone." A fight against Bill C-28 is a political confrontation with the state. If the central labor body says "you cannot win" in such a struggle, it will become a spectator at its own demise.

The stakes for the labor movement have never been higher. At no point has the need been greater for complete solidarity and the full mobilization of labor to defend itself. The attitude of many unions and the CLC to the CUPW strike was a setback in building that needed unity. The situation can be reversed by defending CUPW and every other public sector struggle coming up.

Delegates to the conventions of the Ontario Federation of Labor and the B.C. Federation of Labor can begin a real struggle to defeat Bill C-28 by demanding that the union movement mobilize its might, as it did on October 14, 1976.

## Which side are you on?

Two nights after returning to work, on October 27, postal workers in Ottawa got a chance to show what they thought of the CLC's and NDP's performance during their strike at one of the "Fair deal for public employees" rallies organized by PSAC. About 600, mainly federal government employees attended, including 100 postal workers. The focus of the rally became the Trudeau government's attacks on CUPW and the right to strike.

The first guest speaker, NDP leader Ed Broadbent, was greeted with boos from the postal workers and shouts of "where were you last weekend?"

CUPW members came bearing placards slamming the CLC and its president Dennis McDermott. The signs included, "McDermott sells out again" and "CLC executive, which side are you on?"

Jean-Claude Parrot was received with a standing ovation.

endorsed and implemented controls. The NDP government in Saskatchewan continues to advocate and implement restraint in regard to its employees.

#### Bill C-28 can be defeated

PSAC's rallies should be turned into mass actions of the entire labor movement, not just for public employees. If the gov-

ernment succeeds in inflicting permanent wage controls on public employees, moves to attack the private sector will not be far behind. A massive weakening of almost half the organized labor movement will be a body blow from which labor will find it

difficult to recover.

PSAC's Political Action Groups could be turned into struggle committees and broadened to include all those willing to organize a fight against Bill C-28.

The government should be told that any attempt to reintroduce Bill C-28 will be met with the full mobilization of the labor

# Challenge before B.C. Fed.

By Greg Gigg

VANCOUVER—The November 20-24 B.C. Federation of Labor convention will be an important opportunity for trade unionists to evaluate and discuss the lessons of the recent postal strike. Two completely contrasting approaches should be highlighted as CUPW president J-C Parrot and CLC president Dennis McDermott are both scheduled to address the convention.

The entire labor movement was faced with the challenge of defending CUPW against the back-to-work law and the injunctions. A good deal of the responsibility for the setback of CUPW lies with the CLC and NDP leaderships, which treated CUPW first to deafening silence and then to a stab in the back, as they echoed government calls to obey the slave-labor law.

The B.C. Fed leadership cannot escape critical evaluation. Unlike the CLC, the B.C. Fed did offer token support. Its leading officer, secretary-treasurer Dave McIntyre, promised the postal workers support when he spoke at the CUPW Vancouver membership meeting that voted 83 percent to defy the law October 19.

But a meeting of the representatives of the Vancouver CUPW strike committee

and the B.C. Fed, scheduled for October 23 (day four of the defiance) was postponed until after the CLC executive meeting October 25. When the meeting finally took place, the B.C. Fed leaders came down with a six-point program, which included a coordinating committee of CUPW regional officers and the B.C. Fed; a defence fund; advertisements in the media supporting CUPW's rights; an offer to coordinate with the CLC any support proposals that would come from the parent body—proposals that would never come. A CUPW request for a B.C. Fed mass rally was referred to committee. It was clearly a case of too little too late. CUPW's strike crumbled on the evening of that meeting. The essence of the B.C. Fed response was *delay*.

In past conventions the Fed has voted down the CLC strategy of tripartism, a plan for labor, business, and government comanagement of the economy. Recently, the word "tripartism" has vanished from the vocabulary of most labor leaders, only to be replaced with a new term: "industrial strategy." The words have changed but the song remains the same.

Standing up against the union-busting government like CUPW did is outside the thinking of the CLC union tops. The B.C.

Fed supposedly voted against such crass compliance with the objective of a business-dominated government. Therefore, it must develop a clear alternative strategy. The B.C. Fed executive had a responsibility to move out squarely in defence of CUPW, not waiting for the CLC. A massive show of support from Federation affiliates could have inspired other provincial labor bodies to act. Now the B.C. Fed must organize mass defence of CUPW against all government reprisals.

#### What position on NDP?

The NDP has also been the center of debate at past B.C. Fed conventions. In the framework of support to the NDP the issue has been whether the labor movement should vociferously criticize the NDP when it acts against the interests of unions and working people. The B.C. Fed should call the NDP to heel for its conduct in the CUPW strike. B.C. NDP leader Barrett remained silent, while NDP federal leader Broadbent demanded the union return to work.

The CUPW strike illustrated another important issue before labor. CUPW, a binational union, showed how labor in English Canada and Quebec can unite in struggle. Much of the militancy in the

strike came from its Quebec wing. Unity in action between English-Canadian and Quebecois labor can be furthered by the recognition of the democratic right of the Quebecois to self-determination. This is the position that CUPW supports.

#### Issues not leadership maneuvers

This convention of the B.C. Fed will feature a leadership race. The last leadership race in 1976 saw a bitter fight on the NDP question: to criticize or not to criticize. So far, all the leadership hopefuls have remained silent on policy issues which have been at the center of past Federation debates. Going into the convention, the scene is still dominated by unity slate maneuvers, with program and strategy taking last place.

But the CUPW strike places the need for a new strategy for labor at the top of the agenda. CUPW has given workers a glimpse of a fighting pathway to victory. What is needed is to dump the cowardly, conceding, and collaborationist stance of labor leaders like McDermott.

Greg Gigg is a shop steward in the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway, Transport, and General Workers Union (CBRT & GW) in Vancouver.

# voices from the past...

By Ian Angus

This month the Canadian Trotskyist movement is 50 years old. November 11 marks half a century since Maurice Spector, chairman of the Communist Party of Canada and editor of its newspaper, was expelled from the CP on charges of "succumbing to petty bourgeois pessimism" and supporting "objectively counter-revolutionary" Trotskyism.

In fact it wasn't Spector's ideas that had changed. He was expelled for supporting the program the Communist International had advanced while Lenin was alive, the program the Canadian CP had been founded on. The expulsion of Spector marked a decisive stage in the degeneration of the Communist Party from a revolutionary party into an appendage of the privileged bureaucratic caste that captured political power in the Soviet Union in the mid-1920s. Spector's fight for "Trotskyism" was a fight against this degeneration, a fight to save the Communist Party from Stalinism.

## The Spector-MacDonald team

From its formation in May 1921, two men were constantly identified as the principal leaders of the Communist Party of Canada: Maurice Spector and Jack MacDonald. Spector was the party's chairman throughout the 1920s, and editor of its periodicals; MacDonald was the party's general secretary.

Maurice Spector was one of the most outstanding revolutionary intellectuals of his generation. His interest in socialism began when he was a student at Humber-side Collegiate in Toronto before World War I. By the time he was 18, his articles were appearing in the official magazine of the Social-Democratic Party (SDP), *Canadian Forward*. In 1919, he proposed that the SDP should affiliate to the Third International; by the end of 1920 he was a leader of one of the two groups that fused the following year to create the Communist Party. He was only 23 years old when the CP was founded—the youngest member of its Central Executive Committee.

Jack MacDonald, by contrast, was a self-educated worker militant, born in Scotland, who emigrated to Canada in 1912. In the following years he became one of the best-known and most popular figures in the labor movement in Toronto. In 1919 he was elected vice-president of the Independent Labor Party of Ontario; in the same year he was vice-president of the Metal Trades Council, which organized a brief general strike in solidarity with the workers of Winnipeg. A powerful orator and an exceptionally capable organizer, he declared his support for communism in early 1921, as the central leader of the other group that took part in the formation of the CPC.

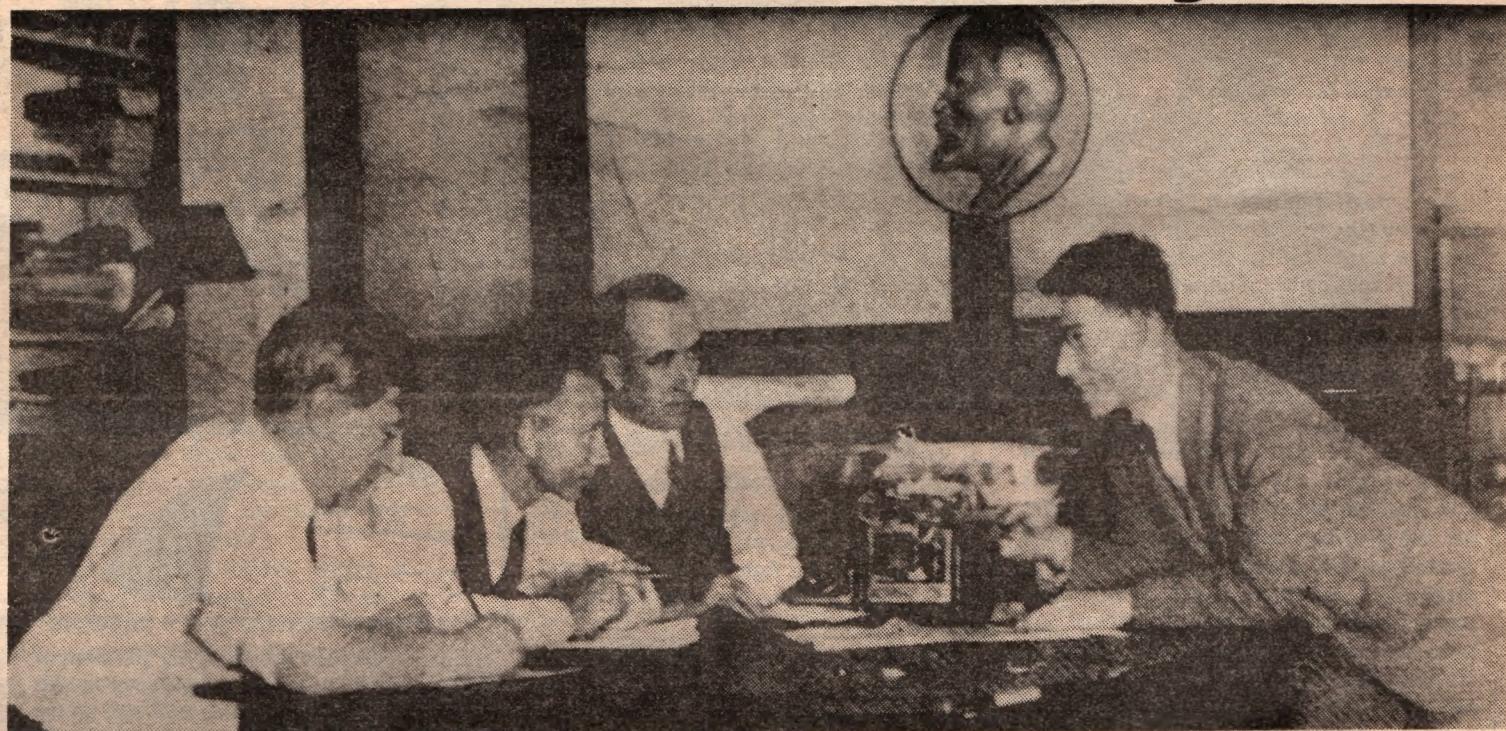
The partnership of MacDonald and Spector was the axis around which the central leadership of the Communist movement in Canada was built in the 1920s. The party they organized was remarkably free of the infighting and factionalism that paralysed the Communist Party of the United States in its first decade—and it was a party in which open debate and discussion were the norm.

## CP denounces anti-Trotsky campaign

The determination of MacDonald and Spector to build a party of honest and dedicated revolutionists was shown clearly in 1925. The campaign against "Trotskyism" was in full swing in the USSR, and the Stalin-Bukharin leadership of the Soviet Communist Party (CPSU) was doing its utmost to line up Communists around the world on their side in the struggle for power. They used their control of the apparatus of the CPSU and the Communist International to prevent Trotsky from speaking out, and they demanded that the Communist parties condemn Trotsky without giving his views a hearing.

In 1925 Canadian Communist Bill Moriarty was sent as a delegate to a Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International (ECCI) in Moscow. Discovering that the question of Trotskyism was on the agenda, he cabled Toronto asking for instructions on how to

# 50 years of Canadian Trotskyism



Pioneer Communists: Maurice Spector, later the founder Canadian Trotskyism, makes a point while (from left) William Moriarty, Tim Buck, and Jack MacDonald listen. Spector was

the editor of the party newspaper and MacDonald was the party's general secretary.



Founding convention of the Revolutionary Workers League/Ligue Ouvrière Révolutionnaire, August 1977. The new Canadian Section of the Fourth International came about

through the fusion of the Groupe Marxiste Révolutionnaire, League for Socialist Action/Ligue Socialiste Ouvrière, and the Revolutionary Marxist Group.

vote.

After polling its members, the CPC Central Executive Committee cabled back:

*"The Executive Committee is not convinced on the basis of evidence obtained, that the Comintern is actually menaced and confronted with a system constituting Trotskyism. Notwithstanding Trotsky's mistakes prior to 1917 and during the course of the revolution, we are unconvinced that the implications of the 'permanent revolution' theory attributed to him are actually entertained by Trotsky and that he contemplates revision of Leninism. We are of the opinion that the prestige of the Comintern has not been enhanced here by the bitterness of the anti-Trotsky attack. No request from leading elements or party membership for discussion in the Party press."*

This cable, and Moriarty's vote based on it, made the Canadian Communist Party the only one in the world to refuse to join in the anti-Trotsky witch-hunt. The Soviet leaders tried their utmost to force the CP to change its policy. Instead, the Canadian CP leadership took their cable to the next party convention in September 1925, where it was adopted as official party policy.

The main author of this cable was Maurice Spector. He read German, one of the main languages of the International, and had followed the debates in the Russian party as closely as was possible in

Canada. He had been in Soviet Russia in 1923-24 when the anti-Trotsky campaign began. He was not fully acquainted with Trotsky's views but he could see that the campaign against Trotsky and his supporters was not legitimate, and he adopted a position of neutrality until he could learn more. (This position contrasts sharply with that taken by Tim Buck, later the central leader of the Stalinized CP in Canada, who voted to condemn Trotsky unheard while at the same time protesting the lack of information available.)

With Stalin's rise to prominence in the Comintern, the neutral position adopted by the Canadian CP in 1925 became untenable. By the end of 1926, under heavy pressure from Moscow, the Canadian CP had reversed its stand and voted to condemn "Trotskyism." Spector was the sole holdout—he voted against the official line and offered to resign his posts. MacDonald, who still failed to understand the implications of the Trotsky-Stalin dispute for the future of the International, voted against Trotskyism for the sake of peace in the party, and at the same time persuaded Spector to remain as party chairman and editor of *The Worker*.

## Spector meets Cannon

In early 1928, in New York City, Spector met James P. Cannon, a founder of the U.S. Communist Party and one of its central leaders. Cannon too was uneasy about

the anti-Trotsky witch-hunt. He later described his meeting with Spector this way:

*"We spent an entire evening together, frankly discussing our doubts and dissatisfaction with the way things were going in Russia. But neither of us knew what to do about it and made no plan or decision to do anything at that time. I think it can be safely said, however, that the thoughts we confided to each other at this meeting in February 1928 prepared the way for our getting together in Moscow at the Sixth World Congress." (The First Ten Years of American Communism, p. 220)*

Cannon and Spector were delegates from their respective parties to the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International in Moscow, July 17 to September 1, 1928. It was at this Congress that Spector was elected as the first Canadian member of the Executive Committee of the International. It was also at this Congress that Stalin prepared for his break with Bukharin and the wild ultra-left turn that the Comintern was to take in 1929.

For Cannon and Spector, however, something more important than the elections or Stalin's backstage maneuvers took place. As members of the Program Commission, Cannon and Spector received copies of a document which to this day remains unpublished in the USSR: Leon

# ...lessons for today

Trotsky's *The Draft Program of the Communist International: A Criticism of Fundamentals*. This long essay (now available in English as *The Third International After Lenin*), written by Trotsky from his place of exile in Alma Ata, was rounded summary of Trotsky's views on the course the International had taken since Lenin's death. In devastating terms it exposed the Stalinist abandonment of Leninism, and called for a return to the revolutionary policies the International had been founded upon.

Spector and Cannon, already uneasy about the course of the International and sympathetic to the plight of the Trotskyist Opposition, read Trotsky's essay with mounting excitement.

#### 'Our doubts had been resolved'

"We let the caucus meetings and the Congress sessions go to the devil while we read and studied this document. Then I knew what I had to do, and so did he. Our doubts had been resolved. It was as clear as daylight that Marxist truth was on the side of Trotsky. We made a compact there and then—Spector and I—that we would come back home and begin a struggle under the banner of Trotskyism." (Cannon, *The History of American Trotskyism*, pp. 49-50)

Spector arrived back in Toronto on October 9, 1928, and began the search for allies in the fight for Trotskyism. Like Cannon, Spector had smuggled a single copy of Trotsky's essay out of the USSR—but unlike Cannon, Spector did not have a ready-made body of factional allies to approach. Cannon had long been the principal figure in one of the three permanent factions that dominated the life of the U.S. Communist Party in the 1920s—these were people who would give his views a hearing, however heretical those views might seem. Most of the initial cadres of the Trotskyist movement in the U.S. came from the Cannon faction.

Spector had no such body of followers experienced in fighting internal party disputes, for the simple reason that the Canadian party had no such history of factionalism. This had enable the party to develop in a relatively healthy way throughout the 1920s. But Spector (and Cannon, too) suffered from the failure of both parties to publish and debate within their ranks the views of the Trotskyist Opposition during the years in which the struggle had developed in the Soviet party and the International. Thus they were in a very vulnerable position when they came up against Stalin's international faction.

#### Expelled from CP

Spector had begun to try to win over some of the younger members of the party—this had to be done in the utmost secrecy, since support of Trotsky was grounds for automatic expulsion—when the axe fell. On October 25, James Cannon, Max Schactman, and Martin Abern, all members of the U.S. CP's Central Committee, were expelled as Trotskyists. The U.S. party leader, Jay Lovestone, to prove himself to Moscow, launched a nationwide witch-hunt. Every party unit was required to vote on the expulsion of the three. Anyone who hesitated, or asked for more information, or voted against the expulsion, was immediately expelled. To aid in his campaign, Lovestone cabled the Canadian party, asking for endorsement of his actions.

The Political Committee of the Canadian CP met on November 6 to consider the matter. Spector refused to vote in favor of the American expulsions, and was promptly suspended from membership. His response was a nine page letter that set out his position in no uncertain terms:

"In reply to the question whether I am prepared to wage an aggressive campaign against 'Trotskyism,' I can assure the Polcom that I am prepared to wage an aggressive campaign for Leninism. . . . Trotsky today stand foursquare for the maintenance of the principles of Leninism, uncontaminated by the opportunist deviations that have been smuggled into the Comintern and U.S.S.R. policy by the present Rykov-Stalin-Bukharin regime..."

Spector's statement recounted the course of the dispute in the Soviet CP and defended Trotsky's position on the prin-

cipal questions. He called on the Canadian CP to initiate a full discussion of the issues, beginning with publication of the documents of the opposition. He concluded:

"I have been a foundation member of the Communist Party of Canada since its organization, in which I took part. I have also been a member of the CEC practically all the time since. Regardless of the immediate organizational consequences I find myself compelled to make the above statement and to further register the fact that nothing on earth can separate me from the Revolutionary Communist movement. Everything that I have stated flows from my convictions that the deviations from Leninism in the C.I. can and must be corrected by a struggle within the International and its sections."

"Long live the Communist International!"

"Long live the Proletarian Revolution!"

Spector knew what the "immediate organizational consequences" of this

statement would be. Support for Trotsky had been outlawed in the International. On November 11 the Central Executive Committee expelled him from the Communist Party.

#### MacDonald joins Trotskyists

Over the next several months, about 30 members of the Communist Party and Young Communist League were expelled, either for supporting Trotsky or for opposing Spector's expulsion. This small group, together with Cannon and about 100 members of the U.S. Communist Party expelled on similar grounds, formed the Communist League of America (Opposition), the first Trotskyist organization on this continent. The CLA(O) is the direct ancestor of the Revolutionary Workers League in Canada and the Socialist Workers Party in the United States today.

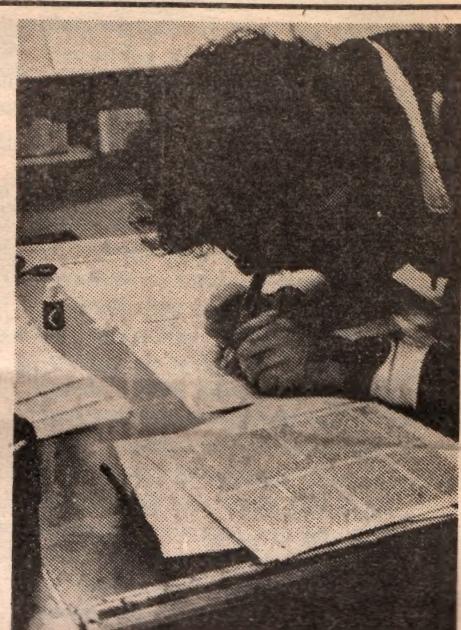
As for the Communist Party, the expulsion of Spector marked the beginning of two years of crisis. By the end of 1930, about 75 percent of the CPC's 1928 mem-

bership had been expelled or resigned from membership. Those expelled included almost every one of the party's founding leaders. By the end of the crisis, Tim Buck was the party's new leader and the CPC was firmly in Stalin's orbit.

One of those expelled was Jack MacDonald. He had voted for Spector's expulsion in 1928: after his own, he went back to study the issues involved. In May 1932 he announced the results of his study:

"I have become convinced that the position, program, and general criticism of the Left Opposition under the brilliant, untiring and courageous leadership of comrade Trotsky are fundamentally correct, and that the Left Opposition is the historical bearer and custodian of true Marxism-Leninism."

MacDonald joined Spector and his comrades: together these pioneers of Canadian Communism made a new beginning in the struggle to build a Canadian revolutionary party.



A Socialist Voice typesetter struggles with antiquated typesetting equipment. We need your help to modernize our production.

## Pioneer machine no match for space-age task

By Ian Angus and Samantha Anderson

"Socialist Voice will carry on the best traditions of its predecessors. It will champion the interests of working people against those of the bosses, banks, and landlords, and their parties and governments."

With those words we launched *Socialist Voice* in September 1977, just over one year ago.

We are a year old, but we are also part of a 50-year tradition of revolutionary socialist journalism, going back to the first articles Maurice Spector wrote for *The Militant* in 1928. (See the article on this page.) We are proud of our part in that tradition, our role in publicizing and defending the struggles of unionists and Quebecois, women and gays, Native people and immigrant workers—all of the oppressed. No other publication can match our record of support for the

worldwide fight for liberation from capitalist oppression.

We want to do far more. We want to eliminate all the barriers which weaken our effort to build the socialist movement in this country.

We face, daily, a major roadblock. Newspapers don't appear magically. After the articles are written and edited, they must be typeset: and that process causes us too many problems and delays. The equipment we are now using to typeset *Socialist Voice* is old. It breaks down frequently; and even when it is working, it is very slow. By modernizing this equipment, we can free valuable time to improve and expand our coverage.

We have the opportunity to buy modern computerized typesetting/word-processing equipment that will notably decrease the time spent typesetting and take over many other time-consuming routine tasks, especially in our circulation office. The acquisition of this new equipment will be

an important step toward our goal of launching a weekly *Socialist Voice*.

But we live in capitalist society, where everything has a price tag. Every penny *Socialist Voice* receives goes to the day-to-day operation of the paper. We have no surplus for major capital expenses. So we are asking you, our readers, for support.

To mark the 50th anniversary of the birth of Canadian Trotskyism, we are launching a special fund drive. Its goal is \$6,000, enough for a downpayment to get that new equipment in and working for us, and for you. Much of the money will be raised at special meetings which *Voice* supporters are holding to mark the 50th anniversary. We urge you to attend and to contribute there. If there is no meeting in your area, or if you can't attend, send your contributions directly to us.

Every contribution, however large or small, will make possible a *Socialist Voice* that meets your needs, better than ever before.

## Celebrate

### 50 years of Trotskyism in Canada

### 40 years of the Fourth International

Edmonton: November 11 for information phone 432-7358

Toronto: December 1 for information phone 363-9618

Vancouver: November 25 for information phone 688-5924

Winnipeg: December 2 for information phone 452-5871

Enclosed is my contribution of ..... to the *Socialist Voice* fund appeal.

I pledge ..... to the *Socialist Voice* fund appeal. I will send the funds by (date) .....

Name .....

Address .....

City .....

Prov. .....

# Tuxedo unionism blocks postal worker victory

By Bob Mills

Not since the 1972 public sector Common Front strike in Quebec has there been such a battle. Even the October 14 general strike, important as it was, did not pose such a challenge to the arrogance of the capitalist class and the antilabor policies of its government.

Having successfully imposed wage controls on Canadian workers for three years, the government has been moving to apply permanent wage controls in the public sector through Bill C-28, eliminate the right to strike for public employees, and carry through massive layoffs and cutbacks.

But the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) was standing in the way. They refused to accept these measures without a fight. For nine days the CUPW membership showed the kind of militancy and solidarity necessary to win this kind of battle. The kind of militancy and solidarity necessary to defeat the government's plans to attack the public sector, keep wages below the rate of inflation, and attack fundamental union rights.

In the months leading up to the final conciliation board report, the government made it clear that it considered the postal contract settlement a test of its ability to apply its new economic policy. While the outcome marked a defeat for the union, the determination of the postal workers to win and the virulence with which the government fought to defeat them brings into sharp relief the kind of struggle that will be necessary to redirect the labor movement toward new perspectives and perhaps begin to turn the whole situation around.

#### Class war: mobilize the troops

The government is determined to win in this struggle to improve the economy (increase profits) at the expense of the working class. Its swift and brutal action in the CUPW strike made it clear that it is prepared to mobilize all the forces at its disposal to win. The ruling class stripped bare the mask of neutrality from Parliament and the courts, revealing them as the bosses' tools.

Their strategy for defeating the strike was to remove the right to strike from the union and at the same time to use all their resources to mobilize "public opinion" against the postal workers, so the mood would be right for them to move in for the kill.

They mobilized all resources, Parliament, the cops, the courts, and the media to win. In response, CUPW had to

mobilize all its resources--its membership and the rest of the trade-union movement.

Had it been organized this well all across the country, the strike could have continued, bringing greater pressure to bear on the Canadian Labor Congress (CLC) and forcing at least sections of the union movement into action in support of the strike.

But instead the NEB sought support through "official channels" in the CLC executive committee. When they were turned down, instead of appealing to the membership of the union movement, they ordered the return to work.

In fact, the CLC executive played a major role in breaking the strike. The government waited for a week before bringing in the big guns--RCMP and firings--for a reason. They were waiting to see whether labor would mobilize its troops in response.

#### Membership must be involved

The membership was CUPW's strongest asset. The membership showed that it would not be intimidated. The more the government upped the ante, the stronger became the resolve of the rank and file. But when the government went after the individuals by threatening to fire them, more than the resolve of individual members was needed.

The CUPW National Executive Board (NEB) and many of the local leaderships failed to really involve union members in the strike, beyond normal picketing duties. Only in a few cities, like Vancouver, Edmonton, and Hamilton, were there mass membership meetings to discuss the government's back-to-work order. These gatherings strengthened membership solidarity and allowed local leaders to explain the meaning of the government maneuvers. These meetings also showed each individual member how determined all his or her workmates were, and helped to counter the effect of media propaganda about "crumbling membership morale."

In Vancouver, membership involvement reached the highest level. There, a broad strike committee, including the shop stewards and executive, coordinated all strike activity. Mass meetings of the membership and a daily strike bulletin kept the strikers informed of developments. When the NEB ordered a return to work, that order was discussed by the members--and accepted only under protest. The workers did not return to work demoralized. In a demonstration several hundred strong they marched through the main Vancouver



Rooney/Socialist Voice  
CLC leadership called on unions to stand back while postal workers fought alone.

Post Office singing *Solidarity forever!*

#### Labor solidarity key

In the midst of the struggle, when postal workers were fighting for their union against the government's scab law, CLC president Dennis McDermott instructed CLC unions to withhold support. In a telegram sent to selected union leaders he advised: "suggest you refrain from commenting on merits of current postal strike, until such time CLC has had opportunity to clarify its position."

The CLC silence was deafening for postal workers. For the government, it was music to its ears.

By waging a counter-campaign to defend CUPW, by placing newspaper ads countering the government's propaganda

#### McDermott rat?

A stormy meeting of the Hamilton and District Labor Council November 3 voted by a two-thirds margin to call for the resignation of the federal government and to give every possible support to the Canadian Union of Postal Workers. The resolution, introduced by Harold Keeton of the Rubber Workers union, also said that "had the CLC rallied full support behind CUPW, the government would have acted differently." Delegates from the Steelworkers and the Electrical Workers joined Keeton in voicing strong criticism of the CLC leadership. One delegate called CLC president Dennis McDermott "a rat" and a traitor to the labor movement.

Meanwhile, a general meeting of the Letter Carriers union in Edmonton voted to call for McDermott's resignation.

and explaining the real issues in the disputes, by mobilizing mass pickets to help the postal workers maintain their picket lines against court injunctions, by sponsoring mass rallies in all major cities to support the strike, the CLC could have shown that it was prepared to wage the war begun by the government attacks and to mobilize its troops in response. This would have redoubled the resolve of the CUPW membership and forced the government to back down.

But the CLC was only prepared to play mediator in this class warfare, with one foot in each camp.

#### Self-fulfilling prophecy

After the strike McDermott explained that you can't take on the government and win. At the moment when the government had been seriously weakened by its crushing defeat in the by-elections, when the membership of CUPW was solid, McDermott told CUPW that the labor movement couldn't win a head-on confrontation with the government.

We've heard this kind of talk before. In motivating the class-collaborationist "industrial strategy" adopted at the last CLC convention, many union leaders argued

that October 14, 1976 showed that confrontation doesn't work. Only compromise and collaboration a la tripartism work. So while they turned their backs on the postal workers, the CLC executive were consorting with business in 23 tripartite commissions, preparing reports on how to improve the capitalist economy.

McDermott, a self-described "street fighter," has turned in his gloves for a three-piece suit, a \$45,000 a year salary, and pleasant relations with the bosses and their governments. If the CLC is ever to serve the interests of the rank-and-file workers, conservative union leaders like McDermott will have to be removed and replaced with rank-and-file leaders, committed to fighting for the working class. Such a leadership will only be forged through struggles. Struggles like the postal workers strike.

The NEB was correct to demand that the CLC executive support their strike but they shouldn't have put all their efforts on this route. They should have made a direct call to all CLC affiliates and union members to support their strike. Many unions and locals had expressed interest in helping.

Cracks had even begun to appear in the CLC. The Canadian Union of Public Employees offered its offices, staff, and financial resources to CUPW. The Quebec wing of the Public Service Alliance of Canada threatened a sympathy strike to support CUPW's fight.

But in several cities attempts by militant postal workers to broaden support for their struggle and beef up the picket line were blocked by local CUPW officials. This was true in Montreal, where other unions were actually discouraged from participating on the CUPW picket line. In Toronto, the executive ignored the appeals of the local strike committee to launch a campaign to win solidarity and support from Toronto-area unions. In Winnipeg, efforts to set up a strike support committee were met with a very cool response by the local leadership.

The NEB could have encouraged local initiatives of this type. But that would have meant passing control of the strike into the hands of the rank and file, encouraging the formation of local strike committees and strike-support groups.

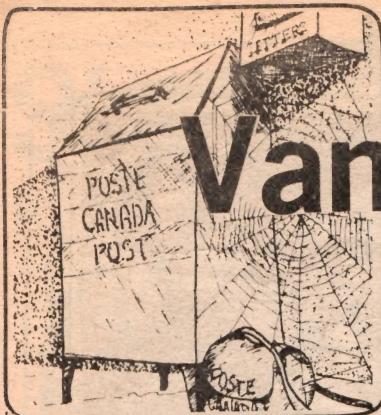
Faced with tremendous odds the NEB went well beyond the bounds of business unionism to lead a militant confrontation with the state. But because they stopped short of full reliance on the membership of their own union and the membership of other unions, they could not provide a strategy for victory.

CUPW has begun to rediscover the methods and the militancy that built the trade-union movement in Canada and has fought the kind of battle that will be necessary to take the whole labor movement forward. In pointing to the weaknesses of the strike we hope to encourage a discussion that can lead to their elimination, thus preparing the union and the whole working class for the battles that lie ahead.



CUPW members march in Vancouver October 14 protest.

Dunning/Socialist Voice



# Vancouver CUPW fights back

By Fred Gilbertson

VANCOUVER—The Vancouver local of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) is showing the way to the rest of the union, and the labor movement as a whole, in organizing a defense of postal workers who are being victimized as a result of their opposition to Bill C-8, the government strike-breaking legislation.

So far, three postal workers here have been suspended for their activities in the strike. Thirty-one members of the local have been charged with disobeying Bill C-8, although only three summonses have been issued.

It would appear that the Post Office is not going to limit its actions to legal prosecutions. Militants in Vancouver and across the country are receiving letters from management that their actions during the strike are being reviewed with a view to taking disciplinary actions, up to and including suspensions and firing.

Management is continuing to harass our members and violate the contract. The workweek has changed from a Sunday-Saturday schedule to a Monday-Sunday one, resulting in many workers having to work a 48-hour week without overtime pay. By this schedule, many workers will be obliged to work 7-10 days without a day off. Supervisors are also watching activists, noting those who appear to be slowing down, and there is a step-up in security.

The Vancouver local is not taking all of this lying down. It has scheduled a mass rally for November 17 around three central themes: Defend CUPW's right to strike; Drop all charges; and, Free collective bargaining for public sector unions. CUPW national president Jean-Claude Parrot has been invited to speak.

Also, in an effort to raise money for the defense, the local will be sponsoring a benefit on November 15.

Before the strike the Vancouver local adopted a proposal urging the Vancouver and

District Labor Council to build an open support committee. One of the downfalls of the strike was that this proposal was referred to the B.C. Fed executive and never got off the ground. Because of the lack of action on this proposal, we are going ahead on our own to organize a broad-based support committee under the direction of the local. This group will be open to trade unionists, and to organizations of women, gays, and so on.

So far the initial response to this committee has been good. The United Fishermen and Allied Workers, the Letter Carriers, the Canadian Association of Industrial, Mechanical, and Allied Workers (CAIMAW), and locals of many other unions, as well as the B.C. Federation of Women, and the Gay Alliance Toward Equality (GATE), have indicated they will attend the first meeting on November 6.

#### Special convention

Because the local sees there has been a lack of leadership at the national and regional levels, it adopted a motion for a special CUPW convention to occur next February to deal with the present situation. Copies of this motion were sent to the 20 largest locals across the country.

Two important questions must be discussed at this convention. The first is a program to defend the interests of postal workers during the transition to a Crown Corporation. The second is a program and strategy for the next 18 months, during which CUPW no longer has the right to strike.

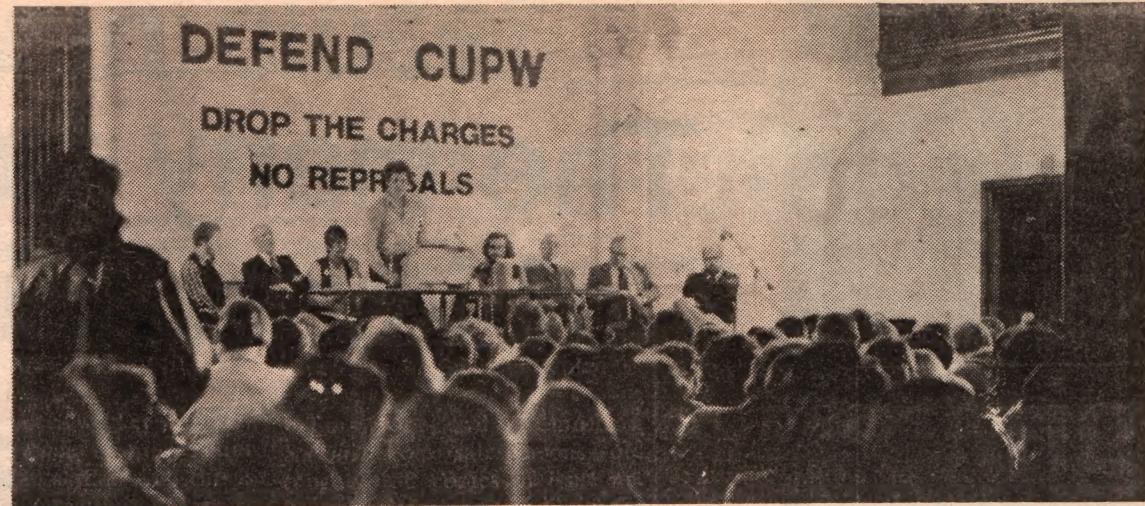
Related to this, a joint meeting of the Vancouver and Fraser Valley locals with the Western region executive and the technical assistants is being organized to discuss the lack of leadership in the region during the strike and the lack of leadership in the fight to defend victimized workers.

Fred Gilbertson is a shop steward in the Vancouver local of CUPW.

DEFEND CUPW

DROP THE CHARGES

NO REPRISALS



Furlotte/Socialist Voice

David Carrell, secretary of Toronto CUPW strike committee and RWL member speaks to Socialist Forum defence rally.

## Rally defends CUPW 300 at Toronto Socialist Forum

By Darrel Furlotte and Art Young

TORONTO—"The purpose of the meeting tonight is to explain why CUPW must be defended and to discuss how to do it," chairwoman Liz Barkley told the crowd of nearly 300 attending the Socialist Forum held here October 28. The Forum was organized by the Revolutionary Workers League to generate support for the postal union in its struggle with the federal government.

The meeting hall was decorated with banners: "Defend CUPW, Drop the charges, No reprisals." Media coverage of the rally reached right across the country and was surprisingly accurate. The main banner and the speakers' platform formed the backdrop for the Canadian Television (CTV) network National News report of CUPW reaction to the government's breaking of the strike. The report then went on to show the meeting itself, and to interview former CUPW president Joe Davidson. Newspapers in Toronto, Sudbury, Vancouver, and Winnipeg picked up the story.

Dave Carrell, secretary of the Toronto CUPW strike committee and a member of the Revolutionary Workers League,

told the rally, "It's true we didn't win. But I for one, and I think many postal workers across the country, went back proud. Proud that we stood up to Trudeau....

"CUPW could not win its strike without massive labor solidarity and it cannot now successfully defend itself from the government without united action by the entire labor movement. Everyone of us must understand this well. We must leave this meeting tonight with the iron-firm resolve to go into our union locals, our NDP constituency associations, our schools, women's organizations, gay and lesbian organizations, community and ethnic organizations, everywhere with one message: Defend CUPW."

Joe Davidson, in his speech, pointed out that, "even the CLC leaders should be aware of the fact that taking away the right to strike and to bargain collectively from the Canadian Union of Postal Workers is the first step toward taking away these rights from the entire public service, and eventually from the entire labor movement.... The labor movement, which has been a slumbering giant for years, must awaken from its slumber and demand active support from the leadership of the CLC...."

Davidson stated that a government sympathetic to labor is necessary. "The trade union movement and the entire working class must therefore work toward the formation and election of a socialist government....

"There is only one thing to vote for at the present time. Whether or not you believe in the NDP, damn it, at the next election you should try to give them a chance. And if they're found wanting, then let's get a socialist government started.... Since this will not happen overnight, however," he added, "the labor movement must oppose by every means possible the divide-and-conquer tactics of the present government....

Other speakers at the rally included Andre Frappier, a CUPW steward in Montreal; Frank Manderville, provincial treasurer of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation; David Hughes, vice-president of the OSSTF; Barney O'Neil of the Toronto and District Railway Workers Council; Joe Mesi, Canadian vice-president of the United Hatters Union; and Peter Cassidy of the York Students Against the Cutbacks.

Approximately \$300 was raised at the meeting to help CUPW in its efforts to stop the victimizations.

## SFL takes step back

By Roger Annis

REGINA—The progressive evolution of the Saskatchewan Federation of Labor (SFL) was brought to an abrupt halt at the SFL annual convention held late last month. The Federation executive presented no program to continue the fight against wage controls; refused to accept motions defending the postal strike; and made no attempt to critically evaluate the performance of the Blakeney NDP government.

Last year the SFL resolved that any attempt to single out the public sector for continued wage controls would be met with the combined militant opposition of the entire labor movement. This year, the convention twice defeated referral motions from the floor which proposed concrete action to defend the postal strike and CUPW leaders following the RCMP raids. Outgoing SFL president John McCleod told one postal worker delegate: "What do you expect when you break the law?"

Last year's convention also strongly condemned tripartism; adopted a position in favor of

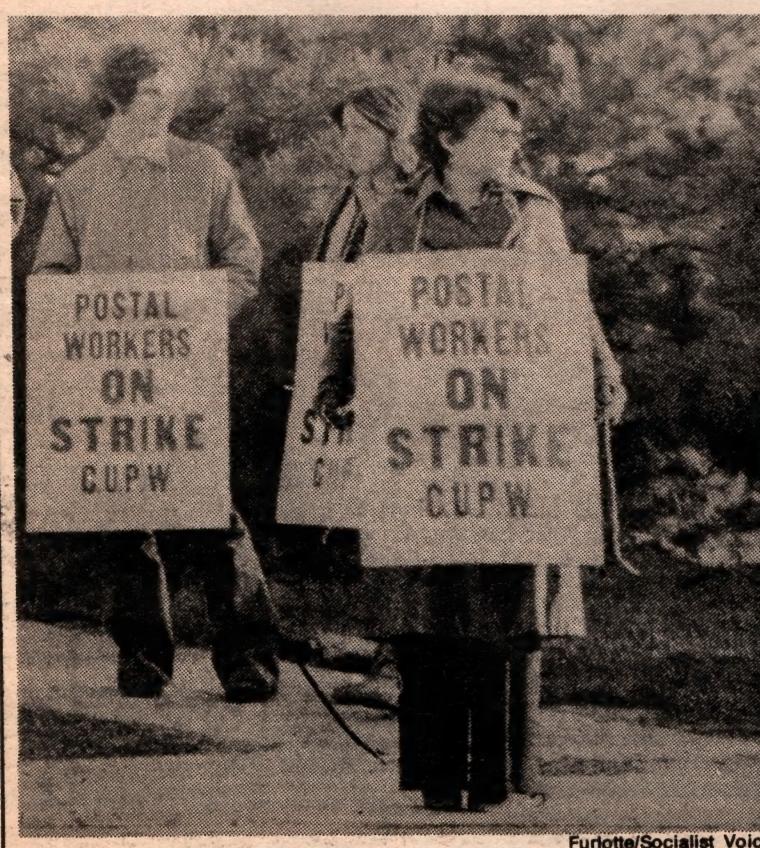
Quebec's right to self-determination, up to and including separation; and was critical of the provincial NDP government's wage controls program. This year, the Fed moved back to a position of uncritical support for the NDP, effectively forsaking the independence of the unions from the government.

The right wing of the Federation mobilized all its forces to execute this political turn and elected an Executive to oversee it. The right-wing slate, headed by Nadine Hunt from the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), drew most of its support from the private sector unions. An alternative slate, headed by Bud Massey of the International Woodworkers (IWA), and supported by CUPE, the Grain Services Union, and some Saskatchewan Government Employees (SGEA), contested the election. This latter slate was seen as standing for an independent and critical stance toward the NDP government, and for this reason it represented an alternative. But no one on the slate succeeded in counterposing

an alternative political line to the traditional approach represented by Hunt. In the end the vote went 193 to 157 for Hunt.

There was an obvious need for left-wing unionists to fight together at the convention. But this was not possible in the absence of a commonly agreed program of action. The Revolutionary Workers League suggested such a program in a leaflet addressed to convention delegates. This included a pledge of total solidarity with the postal workers; a plan to fight Bill C-28; opposition to the NDP government's antilabor policies; a proposal for a militant federal election campaign to elect NDP candidates and defend Quebec's right to self-determination; and, a policy of support for the rights of working women. On the basis of a program like this, militants in the Saskatchewan labor movement could unite to reverse the disturbing rightward drift of the Federation.

Roger Annis is a shop steward at the Interprovincial Pipe and Steel plant in Regina and was a delegate to the SFL convention.



Furlotte/Socialist Voice



continued from p. 12

aimed at preventing any political movement among the masses.

Washington follows this policy in Saudi Arabia and the various Gulf States today. But the whole history of the Middle East since World War II is testimony to how brittle these regimes are.

The Egyptian monarchy was overthrown in 1952. When the Iraqi monarchy was overthrown in 1958, British paratroopers had to land in Jordan to stabilize King Hussein's regime, and U.S. Marines were sent into Lebanon. We have just recently seen a demonstration of how shaky the shah of Iran's hold is in that key country. Is there any reason to believe that the Saudi monarchy won't be faced with similar mass opposition in the future?

Even the most flexible Arab regimes are caught between the pressure of imperialism and the demands of their own people. Even the most stable must contend with the radicalization of the masses and the possibility of popular insurrection. It is this that explains the link between Washington and Israel.

#### Counterrevolutionary base

No State Department official or brass hat at the Pentagon can say what type of regime will be in power in Egypt or Saudi Arabia five years from now. But there is one thing in the Middle East that they can be certain of: As long as the Israeli state exists, it will always side with American imperialism against the threat of social revolution in the Arab world.

Because Israel was established at the expense of the Arab masses and over their opposition, it must maintain its military superiority over the Arab countries. But these countries have far greater populations and resources than Israel. Therefore, the Zionist regime must depend on aid from its imperialist allies, and on maintaining the Arab states in a

# The many faces of imperialism in the Mideast



weakened and backward condition.

Any revolution that inspires and unifies the Arab masses, and pushes forward the modernization and economic development of the Arab countries automatically threatens the Israeli state.

U.S. policymakers are thus able to rely on a counterrevolutionary army with 400,000 troops in the heart of the Arab world. When it appeared, for example, as if King Hussein might be overthrown during the September 1971 civil war in Jordan, Tel Aviv and Washington agreed on a plan for a joint invasion.

#### A new Baghdad Pact?

From Washington's point of view, support to reactionary Arab regimes and its alliance with Israel are two sides of the same coin. Both policies are aimed at preventing the Arab masses from taking control of their destiny.

At the same time, Israeli aggression is one of the factors continually undermining the stability of the pro-imperialist Arab regimes. The Zionist state—like the imperialist system itself—constantly generates anger and opposition among the peoples who are victimized by it.

For the past five years—ever since the October 1973 war and the Arab oil embargo—U.S. policymakers have been seeking a way to more effectively integrate the two pillars of Washington's Mideast policy. The Camp David accords, which provide for a formal treaty between Egypt and Israel, represent an important success for this imperialist effort.

If Washington could bring Jordan and Saudi Arabia into the Camp David framework, it would have a more powerful counterrevolutionary alliance in the Mideast than ever before. Certainly, the governments involved have already begun to discuss the possibilities.

#### No Israeli concessions

Although the Saudi and Jor-

danian regimes are eager to participate in this type of counterrevolutionary alliance, they had hoped that part of such a deal would be Israeli agreement to withdraw from the Arab territory occupied in the 1967 Mideast war.

However, the Camp David accords have increased Begin's leverage in this regard, and the Carter administration has made it plainer than ever that it prefers the continuation of the Israeli occupation in the West Bank and Gaza to any other solution.

*Washington Post* correspondent Don Oberdorfer, in a September 23 article, quoted a high U.S. official, who Oberdorfer made clear was Secretary of State Cyrus Vance. "Asked if it were true that the United States at Camp David agreed to back Israeli demands that its troops remain in West Bank garrisons after the five year 'transitional' period, the official replied, 'If it appeared it was necessary, the answer is yes, we would.'

"Another U.S. official who participated in the meetings said both the United States and Egypt had agreed that Israel has a 'good cause' for stationing its troops on the West Bank indefinitely for security reasons."

When U.S. and Israeli officials talk about "security," what they are really referring to are the measures that can most effectively suppress the Arab masses. Looked at from this point of view, the editors of the *Wall Street Journal* commented September 22, continuation of the Israeli occupation would benefit King Hussein.

As the *Journal* put it, "it is not easy to see what kind of West Bank 'settlement' would serve his own interests better than the de facto status quo.... Does he want to incorporate the West Bank in to Jordan, leaving his Hashemite kingdom ruling a nation with a Palestinian majority? After all, he fought a war to expel the PLO. Does King Hussein, any more than the Israelis, want a neighbor ruled by the PLO and supported by the Soviet Union?"

#### Moscow frozen out

It is hardly surprising that Moscow has reacted angrily to being frozen out of the Mideast negotiations and to the prospect of a new anti-Soviet alliance in the region under Washington's leadership. Immediately after the Camp David accords were made public, the Soviet news agency, Tass, condemned them as a "plot against Arabs" and denounced Sadat's "betrayal of the cause of the Arab people of Palestine."

But the truth is that it was precisely the Kremlin's policy of detente with American imperialism that helped prepare the way for Carter's diplomatic triumph.

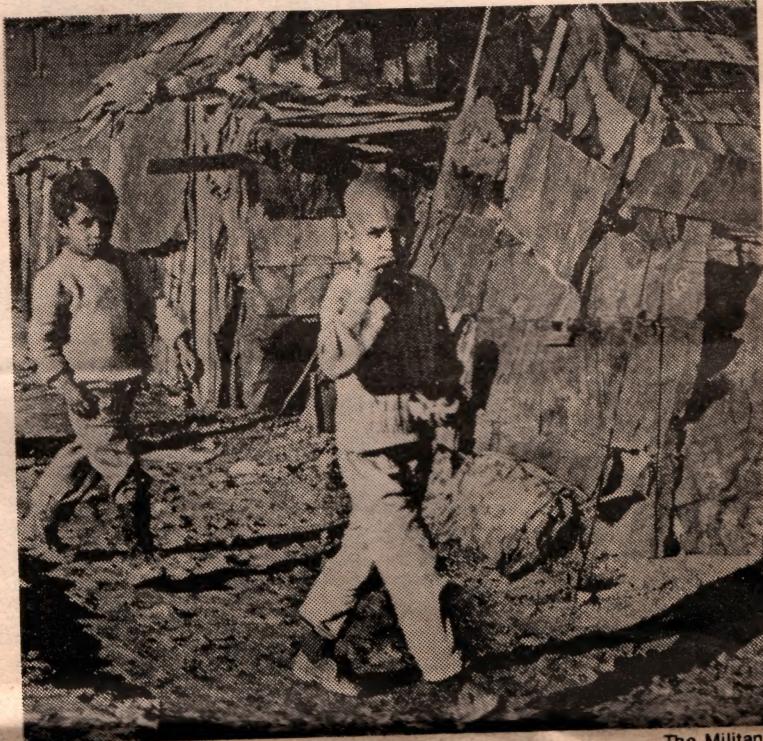
The first Nixon-Brezhnev summit meeting took place in May 1972. David Hirst reported in the June 29, 1972, *Washington Post* that shortly before the summit "high-ranking Soviet of

ficials" had explained to a delegation of Syrian Communists "that the Soviet Union will not support the Arabs in actions that could lead to confrontation between Russia and the United States."

The Kremlin's policy, which

minority to maintain its privileged position, and by other aspects of the class struggle within Lebanon, will continue to convulse the country.

Insofar as the Palestinians are concerned, the Camp David accords were a faithful reflection of



The Militant  
Palestinian children driven from their homeland by Israeli government in refugee hovels in Lebanon.

made it easier for Sadat to turn to Washington, also contributed to the defeat of the Palestinian and leftist forces in the Lebanese civil war. Moscow refused to jeopardize its friendly diplomatic relations with the Syrian regime, even though the Syrian army intervened in behalf of the rightist forces in Lebanon.

While the Kremlin stood by and tried to play both sides against the middle, the defeat of the Palestinians in Lebanon helped establish the political atmosphere that enabled Sadat to make this trip to Jerusalem.

#### Crisis in Lebanon

There is no doubt that American imperialism has made substantial gains in the Middle East over the past five years—gains that have been formalized in the Camp David accords.

On the other hand, it is already clear that the Camp David accords will not lead to peace. They will not even lead to the stable imperialist domination that is Washington's vision of "peace."

The crisis in Lebanon is the most obvious example. It threatens to blow up the summit accords even before Sadat and Begin sign a treaty. And if an Israeli-Egyptian treaty is signed, it will make it easier for the Zionist regime to embark on adventures in Lebanon or against Syria—adventures that could easily spark an all-out war.

Nor is the Lebanese crisis going to disappear. The pressures generated by Israeli attempts to smash the struggles of the Palestinian population there, by the attempts of the Maronite

Washington's attitude. There will continue to be plenty of vague promises and rhetoric, but on the central issues, Washington will continue to back the Israeli regime down the line.

It must do so, because the Zionist state remains imperialism's most powerful and dependable bulwark against the Arab revolution, and maintaining the dispersal of the Palestinians and preventing the establishment of a Palestinian state is crucial to Israel's stability.

Washington's inability to offer even the most modest concessions to 1.5 million Palestinians living under Israeli rule, and to nearly 2 million Palestinian refugees who were deprived of their land and their homes by the Zionist state, ensures that the Arab-Israeli conflict will continue unabated.

The Palestinians will continue to struggle against their oppression, Israel will continue to strike out at the Palestinian population in the surrounding countries, arousing anger and indignation throughout the Arab world, and the Arab regimes will continue to be caught between Israeli threats and the demands of the masses for action against Zionist aggression.

The fact is that the deeper Washington gets involved in the Middle East, and the more elaborate and far-reaching its investments—both economic and political—the greater is the danger of U.S. military intervention, and with it, of World War III.

That is the real meaning of the Camp David accords.

—abridged from an article in the *The Militant*



The Militant  
British troops landed in Egypt in 1882. After World War II, U.S. replaced Britain as main imperialist power in Mideast.

# 'In God We Trust'

By Wally Seccombe

"In God We Trust." So goes the motto printed on American currency. But the real gods of international high finance haven't been getting the message recently. They have decidedly broken faith with the American dollar and have been dumping it by the billions.

In the past year the U.S. dollar has plummeted 16 percent against other major world currencies. At the annual meeting of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank in Washington at the end of September, Carter pledged his honor and "reputation as a leader to maintain a strong dollar."

The global czars of high finance called his bluff. Since their September meeting, the dollar tumbled 7 percent as financiers continued to sell it short on all the world's major exchanges. Carter's hand was forced.

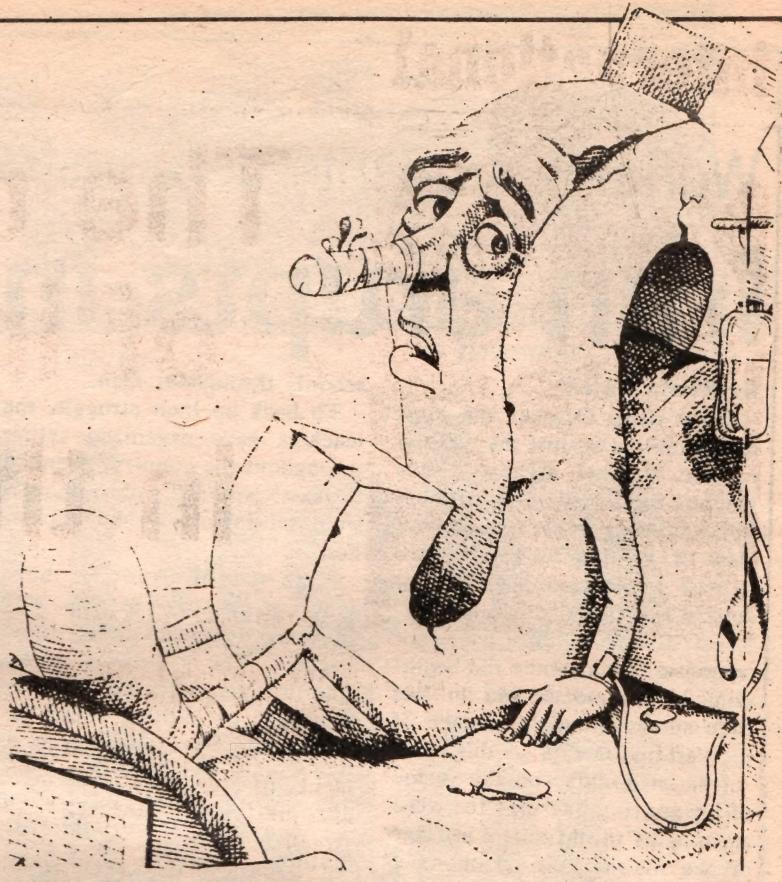
In his November 1 announcement of an emergency package to stem the tide flowing against the dollar, Carter carefully avoided any mention of the recession his measures are virtually certain to provoke for the U.S. economy.

As Ronald Anderson pointed out in the *Globe and Mail*, "No government is so politically unwise as to take credit for courting recession." Exactly. But that is what Carter's finger-plugging exercise in the dollar dyke will precipitate, reversing earlier stimulative monetary and tax policies which were designed to give the sleepy economic recovery a further shot of badly needed Keynesian amphetamine.

Carter has now cut back the money supply while bumping the prime lending rate to a record 9.5 percent. This double whammy is certain to skuttle the capital investment plans of American in-

dustrialists at home, while on the demand side, further repress consumer spending. As the U.S. inflation rate threatens to break the 10 percent barrier the paycheques of workers are shrinking by comparison, thus further deflating the prospects of a pick-up in consumer demand.

The recessionary fallout of Carter's desperate dollar defense will have considerable impact on the Canadian economy. The one bright spot in the Canadian economy in recent months has been a positive balance of trade, due to increases in Canadian exports to the U.S. Any recession in the U.S. economy (which has grown much more rapidly than the Canadian economy in the last two years) will clobber Canada's improving export picture and almost certainly hasten this economy's slide down the same slippery recessionary slope.



## Unemployment: The profits of industry

Darrel Furlotte

According to government figures unemployment currently is about 8.5 percent of the labor force—almost one million workers. The NDP and CLC, by including the half million "hidden" unemployed, claim a figure of 13 percent unemployment.

The people who control the purse strings, the Liberals, Tories, bankers, and business executives, all publicly claim that they are in favor of full employment. So why does mass unemployment exist?

There is only one reason—because it is profitable and necessary for the capitalists to keep millions of people out of work.

That may seem contradictory, since employers make profits by hiring workers to make goods, and then selling the goods. Unemployed workers produce nothing and can't buy much, so

where's the profit?

There is a contradiction all right, but it is not in my statement. It is in the capitalist system itself. The capitalist system, based on the profit motive rather than human needs, requires the employment of workers. But only up to a point. At the point where workers' wages begin to cut into profits, the "employers" use mass unemployment to drive down wages and to help them keep the work force under control.

To maximize profits and beat out its competitors, each capitalist firm seeks to produce as much as it can sell while hiring the fewest possible workers. Competition from other firms and from other countries forces them to introduce technological developments and automation, so that each year workers produce more goods per hour.

If the economy were rationally

organized to meet human needs, automation would be a blessing. Increased productivity would mean a higher standard of living for everyone and shorter hours of work. That is one of the objectives postal workers are struggling for, and that governments and the ruling class are fighting against.

Owners of industry don't introduce new machines to benefit workers—only to make higher profits by saving money on wages.

In the last period of extended expansion, from the late 40s to the 70s, when new products were introduced and Europe and Japan were being rebuilt after the destruction of World War II, the profits from increased productivity were reinvested in new machinery and factories. Until the market for goods was saturated the capitalists could expand

their productive capacity and they could employ most workers profitably, thereby maintaining "full" employment.

But this process, with each firm rushing to capture the largest possible share of the market, inevitably leads to an excess of productive capacity (from a profit point of view) and a shortage of places to reinvest profits. The rate of profit begins to decline steadily. That's the situation capitalism is in today; not just in Canada, or in a few countries, but on a worldwide scale.

The scope of the problem for world capitalism is immense. Virtually every major industry is operating at 80 percent or less of its productive capacity: steel, automobiles, oil, and so on. Accumulated profits being held as cash and short-term securities, instead of being spent to build

new machinery and equipment, total in the hundreds of billions of dollars. International Business Machines (IBM) alone had 4.9 billion on hand as at March 31, 1978!

Meanwhile, in just the advanced capitalist countries, the number of unemployed workers approaches 17 million. Just think what could be accomplished by combining those millions of unemployed with the billions of cash reserves and "excess" productive capacity. Those phenomenal resources—now totally wasted—could solve problems of good mass transportation, health services, housing, environmental damage, in short order.

Contrary to all their claims, the capitalists don't make profits in order to create jobs. Rather, they create jobs only if it will increase profits.



By Ian Angus

James P. Cannon once referred to "the most stupid of all pastimes—the reading of 'mystery' stories." I'm glad that the revolutionary socialist movement doesn't take positions on such questions, because I devour mysteries by the dozen. I have read thousands of them, and I expect to read thousands more. Good, bad or indifferent, they are what I read when I don't want to have to think very hard.

But I know what Cannon meant. Most mysteries are about the idle rich, the capitalists, and the upper middle class. Worse, they are written by people whose social awareness hasn't moved an inch since about 1955.

That's why it was a pleasure to read and now to see the movie, *The Big Fix*. If you are a radical, you'll probably enjoy it. If you

are a radical who was active in student politics in the late 1960s, you'll definitely like it. And if you also like mysteries, you'll love it.

The hero, played by Richard Dreyfuss, is an ex-campus radical turned private detective. He is hired by some ex-radicals now in the Democratic Party, to find out who is smearing their campaign. The main suspect is one Howard Eppis, clearly modelled on Jerry Rubin, who is in the "underground."

That outline doesn't do the movie justice. It's hilarious. It's worth seeing just for Dreyfuss's "old left" aunt, who justly describes the Democratic Party candidate as "California's answer to melba toast," and who offers to tell her grandnephews "a story about the Albanian Labor Party."

The private eyes of the '50s and '60s were all cynical middle-aged men with hearts of gold. Translate that into the '70s and you have a cynical ex-student radical who still gets tears in his eyes when he watches old news films of antiwar demonstrations. A man blackmails an aspiring young lawyer in the District Attorney's office by threatening to tell the D.A. who organized the Fair Play for Cuba Committee in

1962. The translation is perfect. The plot is clean and fair—lots of clues and a surprise ending. Dreyfuss proves once again that he is one of the best young actors in Hollywood today.

It's not a great movie. It's not a profound movie. It doesn't have anything to say. But if you are looking for a movie that you can enjoy, a movie that won't force you to think very hard, see *The Big Fix*.



Richard Dreyfuss

the  
Big Fix

REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS LEAGUE	
Winnipeg	Box 2005 452-5871
Hamilton	Box 5063, Station E L8S 4K9
Toronto	334 Queen St. West M5V 2A2 363-9618
Montreal	226 est. rue Ste-Catherine H2X 1L1 861-3018
Joliette	C.P. 1
Quebec	324 de la Couronne Limoilou G1K 6E6 522-4927
Sherbrooke	C.P. 1593

Workers, students demonstrate

## Iran erupts in street fighting

By Parvin Najafi

Since early October the mass mobilizations against the tyranny of the Pahlavi dynasty have reached unprecedented proportions, drawing in every layer and class of Iranian society. Strikes by vast segments of the working class are continuing at full force. Street demonstrations have not ceased for a day since the beginning of the month and in fact have spread to every corner of the vast country.

Iran has truly become the scene of gigantic battles for the sovereignty of the people in place of the bloody rule of the dictatorial monarch. In this struggle the oppressed of Iran are conquering one barricade after another from the enemy, pushing forward for a complete victory over the shah.

The massive might of the Iranian proletariat is behind this upsurge. Since the beginning of October, nearly every factory, service industry, and government ministry has either been on strike or is planning to walk out. The strikes are taking on an increasingly sharp political character as demands for freedom of political prisoners, the lifting of martial law, a return of the exiles, an end to censorship, and the removal of SAVAK branches from the workplaces (the "security office," as it is called in Iran) are being put forward more and more as the most central demands of the strikers.

### The Teachers Strike

Among the most prominent strikes is that of the 400,000 teachers, which has shut down all

schools throughout Iran.

To back up their struggle, the teachers have organized rallies throughout the country, attended by massive numbers of supporters from all sectors of the population.

High-school students have gone out on strike as well, with demands similar to those of the teachers. The shutdown of the schools has released tens of thousands of militant young activists, who have now begun to play a more and more prominent role in organizing and leading the massive street demonstrations.

In fact, the majority of demonstrations that have taken place in Iran in the past few weeks have not been called by the religious leaders but have been called, organized, and led by teachers and students.

The demands, appeals, and statements issued by striking workers and demonstrators have received prominent coverage in the press, owing to a major victory by striking journalists and employees of *Kayhan* and *Etela'at*, the country's two largest newspapers, that resulted in a considerable easing of censorship. This coverage by itself is greatly assisting the mass mobilizations.

On October 26, another important victory was wrested from the shah's regime, with the release of 1,126 political prisoners. The pretext was that the shah had pardoned them on his birthday.

There have also been an incalculable number of strikes whose character has been more economic than political. One of



Protesters with anti-Shah banners march through streets of Tehran, Iran's capital city.

the most important of these is the strike of postal workers, who went out for 21 days beginning in early October. During this whole period not a single letter or package was delivered.

Industrial workers put their massive power behind the strikes. Those who walked out included the 70,000 production workers at the giant Khuzestan oil fields, 30,000 workers at the big steel mill in Isfahan, 30,000 workers in the Beskar Industrial Group, 7,000 agricultural workers at the giant agribusiness complex in Ahwaz, 2,000 copper miners in Sar-cheshmeh, several thousand textile workers at different cities, and countless others in smaller

industries across the country.

Longshoremen are also on strike, and except for the oil that is pumped into tankers through underground pipelines, nothing is being exported or imported from Iran.

### Demonstrators take over the streets

The street demonstrations held in October have surpassed anything previously seen in Iran's history. Cities that have a population of only 100,000, for example, have had repeated demonstrations of 60,000 to 70,000 persons. The mood in these demonstrations is growing more determined.

A month after the bloodbath of

"Black Friday," September 8, the mass movement has reemerged in Iran, this time much more powerful and with the solid backing of the working class. The whole mood and atmosphere of the demonstrations and strikes clearly indicates that the masses of oppressed and exploited have moved sharply to the left.

The present movement in the streets of Iran is independent in character. No single organization or group of leaders have control over it or can order it to disperse before its central aim is won—the overthrow of the Pahlavi monarchy.

abridged from articles in *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*

## A century of imperialism

### Camp David another chapter

By David Frankel

U.S. policy in the Middle East, as everywhere else in the world, is intended to preserve and extend American economic and political power. Of course, President Carter didn't put it that way when he explained the Camp David accords on television. Instead, he insisted that the purpose of his Mideast policy is "to use our influence and efforts to advance the cause of peace."

Anybody who wants an idea of what is really going on in the Middle East today would be well advised to skip over Carter's rhetoric and the applause being orchestrated by the big-business

media. The real meaning of the Camp David accords can only be understood by looking at the underlying interests that Washington is trying to defend.

### Imperialist conquest

As a strategic crossroad between Africa, Asia, and Europe, the Middle East was always a prime target for imperialist expansion. The military and commercial importance of the region was increased with the completion of the Suez Canal in 1869. In 1882, British troops landed in Egypt. They were to remain there for the next 74 years.

With the increasing reliance of the industrialized countries on

oil, another factor was introduced. As early as July 1914, the British Parliament heard Winston Churchill, then first lord of the admiralty, argue that "we must become the owners, or at any rate the controllers of the source, of at least a proportion of the supply of natural oil which we require."

World War I provided the British with the chance they were waiting for. The Ottoman Empire, which ruled most of the Middle East, sided with Germany in the war. In 1916, secret negotiations between Britain and France resulted in the Sykes-Picot Treaty. The two wartime allies agreed to divide up the spoils between them—Palestine, Iraq, and Jordan were to go to the British, and Syria and Lebanon were to go to the French.

What about the people living in those countries? They were never consulted.

When the Arab peoples protested that they had been promised their independence by the British, and pointed to the allied slogans about a "war for democracy," they were answered with French and British armies.

Until World War II, British imperialism reigned supreme in the Middle East. In 1940, Britain controlled an estimated 72 percent of Mideast oil reserves, com-

pared to a U.S. share of less than 10 percent. The very terms "Middle East" and "Far East" refer to the location of these areas in relation to Britain.

### British decline

But World War II marked the turning point for the old colonial empires. In 1944, Churchill was to plaintively wire Franklin D. Roosevelt: "There is apprehension here that the United States has a desire to deprive us of our oil assets in the Middle East. . . ."

And indeed, by 1967 estimated British reserves had fallen to 29.3 percent of Mideastern oil, while U.S.-owned reserves had risen to 58.6 percent.

Following the 1973 oil embargo, the Arab regimes took over formal control of a large part of these reserves. But in practice, little has changed. The imperialist-controlled oil companies continue to manage the production of the oil, for a fee, take a guaranteed share for themselves, and buy most of the rest at a fixed price. Thus, production, refining, shipping, and marketing remain in the same hands.

Harold Haynes, chairman of Standard Oil of California, was quoted in the September 11 issue of *Time* magazine on the impact of the Saudi regime's takeover of 60 percent of Aramco. As Haynes put it, the main result is that

"capital investment will be supplied by the Saudis. We are relieved of that responsibility."

As far as Washington is concerned, the central question in the Middle East is how to maintain its hold on the region's oil, which accounts for 38 percent of U.S. petroleum imports, and 57 percent of Japan's and Western Europe's.

At the same time, the Arab world has become an increasingly important market for the imperialist countries, and a crucial area in the military competition between Washington and Moscow.

### Dangerous processes

Zbigniew Brzezinski put his finger on Washington's main worry in an interview in the June 1976 *Bulletin of American Professors for Peace in the Middle East*. "There are certain dangerous processes at work in the region," Brzezinski said, "... in particular, the underlying process of the radicalization of the Arab masses."

Direct colonial control of the oil-producing areas has been ruled out precisely because of the struggles of the Arab masses, which Brzezinski seeks some way to control. A second method of imperialist control has been to support neocolonial regimes whose repressive policies are

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